

A
DISCOURSE
OF THE
Nature and Necessity
OF
FAITH
IN
Jesus Christ:
WITH

AN ANSWER to the Pleas of our modern
UNITARIANS for the Sufficiency
of bare Morality or mere Charity to Sal-
vation.

By *NATHANAEL TAYLOR.*

EDINBURGH,

Printed by *John Mosman* and *William*
Brown, His Majesty's Printers.

M. DCCXXVII.

100-11-11

15...62



T H E

Epistle to the Reader.

T IS a common Observation of heavy Bodies in their Descent, that the further they fall, the swifter they move, the exact Proportions whereof some curious Men pretend very nicely to calculate and adjust: The Cause whereof, the antient Philosophers will have to be an internal Principle of Gravity; but modern ones tell us, 'tis the Pressure of some fine and subtil Particles of Matter, the more of which gets on their Backs, the greater is that Force wherewith they push 'em forward, and send 'em a-going. Something like this there is in Heresy; for when once Men have taken one Step over the fatal Precipice, what through the Weight of the innate Principle of Corruption, and what through the secret Influence of the invisible Powers of Darknes, down they tumble apace, with greater Speed every Day than other, till they drop into the Lake of open Infidelity, which lies at the Bottom; and whither their next Fall will be, is easy to determine.

We have a Proof of this in some of the foreign Unitarians. They began with denying the Deity and Satisfaction of Christ. Thence

Franciscus Davidis, Christianus Francken, Gli-
rius and others proceeded to deny the Lawful-
ness of giving religious Worship to him; with
whom, in this, our English * Unitarians, who
are their Spawn, do generally fall in.

Smalcus reproaches this Tribe, as Persons
of † little Understanding, and puff'd up with
a Jewish Spirit. Niemojevius, one of the Uni-
tarian Fraternity, says, ‡ they are ignorant of
Christ, have never tasted how kind and sweet
the Lord is; and that 'tis most certain, that
all who are of this Strain, are Pseudo-christi-
ans, or luke-warm ones, and are not built on
Christ as lively Stones. And Socinus himself
every where thunders against 'em as Jews.* and
Mahometans more than Hereticks, unworthy of
the Christian Name, who did in Reality, and
in their Hearts altogether deny Jesus to be the
Messiah, that nothing more wicked could have
been invented for † depraving our Religion,
that 'tis Impudence in them to profess them-
selves

* Brief Hist. of Unit. p. 109. Ans. to L. Milb. p.
46, 47, 48, 49. Confid. of Explic. of the Trin. p. 11,
13, 27, 28, 59. † Adeo ut homines isti non multum
intelligere dici possint, qui spiritu Judaico inflati,
&c. Smalcus de Divin. J. Christi, Cap. 24. ‡ So-
cini Opera, Tom. 1. p. 398. Col. 1. & Tom. 2. p.
466. Col. 1. For we have several Epistles between Nie-
mojevius and Socinus twice over, and somewhat more
largely in the first Tome than in the second. * Oper.
Tom. 1. p. 400. Col. 2. it. p. 656. Tom. 2. p. 467.
it. p. 535. it. p. 538. Col. 2. † Resp. ad Wiek.
Tom. 2. p. 538. it. p. 470.

Serves to be Christians, that they can't be saved, and that Palæologus, for this Reason, was justly left of God to turn Papist, to be put to Death in this World, and be damned in the next.

*And, in another Place, he brands 'em in the Cheek; for, he tells us, he never knew * one good Man among them all; but he had seen or known many of them that were turned Epicurians, and down-right Atheists, which (saith he) is not at all to be wondred at, for this Opinion of theirs does, by a short Cut, lead them to Epicureism and Atheism.*

Notwithstanding all this Heat, it will be impossible to maintain the giving religious Worship to Christ, when his Deity, the Foundation thereof, is denied; for religiously to pray to a mere Creature, is vile Idolatry. And Socinus was, on another Account, the unfittest Man in the World to pronounce so severe a Censure; for he affirmed only, that it was lawful † to invoke our blessed Lord, (and then too, we must be sure, it be only ‡ in Matters belonging to his Church) but it was no commanded Duty,

* Neminem se ex istorum numero adhuc novisse qui Christianâ pietate & vitæ sanctimonîâ esset præditus; immo nonnullos ex ipsis se vidisse aut scivisse Epicureos & plane Atheos factos. Nec mirum esse, cum hæc ad Epicureismum & Atheismum homini Christi sacris initiato via compendiaria quædam foret, Socin. Op. Tom. 2. p. 773. Col. 1. † Ib. p. 465. Col. 1. ‡ Ib. p. 803. Col. 1.

though, he says, we are required to * adore and trust him. For which Niemojevius, though at other Times he flatters and fawns upon him, yet tells him on this Occasion, that he had wholly ruined their Cause (as indeed he had;) and that he talked † impertinently, and, by his good Leave, a little inconsiderately. Add hereunto what Socinus saith in another ‡ Place, and which, in vain, he does elsewhere * endeavour to soften and excuse, ' that if any Man hath but so much Faith, that he can always go directly to God himself, and don't need the Comfort which arises from the Invocation of Christ, his Brother, tempted in all Things, this Man hath no Need to invoke Christ.

Smalcus too had as little Reason for his being so sharp on these Men, seeing he tells us, that it don't seem possible † to them who a little deeply consider the Matter, that there should be any Precept concerning the Invocation of Christ, though the same Gentleman, in the larger

* Socin. Op. Tom. 2. p. 715. † Facis id impertinenter, immo (pace tuâ sit dictum) minus considerate, Ib. p. 470. Col. 2. ‡ Quod si quis tantâ est fide præditus, ut ad Deum ipsum perpetuâ rectâ accedere audeat, nec consolatione, quæ ex Christi Fratris sui, per omniâ tentati invocatione proficiscitur, indigeat, huic non opus est, ut Christum invocet, Ib. p. 715. Col. 2. * Cont. Wiek. Tom. 2. p. 558, 559. † Immo si quis rem paulo altius consideret, quod ad Christi invocationem attinet, non videtur fieri posse, ut extet de eâ aliquod præceptum, Smalcus ubi supra.

ger Racovian Catechism, tells us, the Worship of Christ was a Precept * tack'd to the First Commandment of the Decalogue. Now the requiring the Worship of Two Gods, is a very extraordinary Addition to the Command of having but One.

But I leave them to squabble and fight it out among themselves as well as they can; for these zealous Sticklers for unlimited Toleration, did formerly, by their own † Confession, very bitterly persecute one another about this Point, though now their Followers among us are for ‡ compounding the Matter.

I proceed to shew, in a few Instances, the Effects of their Principles, which we shall find to be agreeable to their natural Tendency, as their great Patriarch hath forewarn'd us.

Puccius, who professed himself to be of * Socinus's Mind, and is thereupon highly applauded by him, does, in a Manner, reject the Scriptures as an useless Book, pleads for the Light within, turns a down-right Seeker, a perfect Visionary, a mere Fool, and at last he drops like a Soland Goose into the Sea of Popery; as also did Palæologus †.

* Cap. de Præceptis Christi quæ legi addidit, Qu. 29. † Brief Hist. of Unit. p. 109. ‡ Ans. to L. Milb. p. 49. * Socini Epist. ad Kadecium tertia Oper. Tom. 1. p. 378, &c. † Socin. cont. Wiekum, p. 538. Tom. 2.

Socinus's honoured, and learned, and virtuous, and pious Friend (as he calls him) Mat. Radecius was as very a Seeker as Puccius *.

† Franciscus Davidis denied that Christ spake by the prophesical Spirit, and affirmed, that what he said must be examined by, and reconciled with Moses and the Prophets, or else be rejected; that the Old Testament was not antiquated, or any Way changed by the New, which new one lasted only till the Destruction of Jerusalem; that he is not an actual King, nor no longer a Mediator.

‡ Martin Seidelius affirms, that the Prophets and the New Testament, do manifestly contradict each other, and therefore he is for the former, as being the more antient. As for Jesus Christ, he did not belong to his Religion, which was confined wholly to the Decalogue..

The same accursed Weed of Socinianism being transplanted into our English Soil, hath brought forth the same Fruit.

'Tis not for Want of other Evidence that I shall confine my self to those Writers, who gave Occasion for the following Discourse, of which I have a few Things to acquaint the Reader withal.

When Mr. T. Firmin died, one of the Party wrote his Life, and another prints a Funeral Ser-

* Socin. Op. Tom. 1. p. 380. Col. 2. † Thesis Franc. Davidis, Socini Op. Tom. 2. p. 801, 802. ‡ Seidelii Epist. in Socin. Op. Tom. 2. p. 806.

Sermon on that Occasion. Some Passages therein caused Mr. L. Milbourn first to preach at St. Paul's, and then to print a Sermon, intituled, False Faith not justified by Care of the Poor. This so inflamed one of that Sect, that he publishes a Book, which he calls a Vindication of the Memory of the late excellent and charitable Mr. T. Firmin, from the injurious Reflections of Mr. Luke Milbourn, in that Sermon of his.

I have taken notice of a Passage or two in the Life and Funeral sermon; but I dare declare, I do not design any Reflections on the Dead, nor will I disturb his Ashes; nor do I appear in Mr. Milbourn's Behalf, either as to his Text, or the Way of managing it; he is of Age, and let him speak for himself. 'Tis the Errors of the Living that I have to do withal, and my main Business is with the Vindicator, whose Design is to subvert the Gospel of my blessed Lord and Saviour, in whose Defence alone I therefore appear.

Downright Infidelity is the Thing he drives at, this he chews upon, mumbles up and down in his Mouth, it sticks between his Teeth, and he doth, in most Places, only stammer and lisp it out; but 'tis not hard to guess at his Meaning, and, that we might not be at a Loss, in one Place of his Book, which the Reader may find cited out of him at large in the 95. 96 Pages of the following Treatise, he speaks out, and opens his Mouth so wide, that we may see his whole Heart, and 'tis an evil Heart of Unbelief.

Who

The Epistle to

*Who, or what he is, I have not been solicitous to enquire. I know no more of him than what he tells us of himself, viz. that he is the Son of a * Citizen, and a small Dealer among them, &c. and, saith he, I † write in Haste. Indeed he is so much in Haste, that he has dropt all his Christianity by the Way, if ever he had any. Men who ride Post, are apt to blunder and stumble, and confound one Thing with another. So hath he done; for speaking about the Faith of Abraham, and the Patriarchs before and after him, that God is, and is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him: Might not other People (says he ‡) have this Faith who were not of the Family and Kindred of Abraham? what thinks he of Melchizedeck? And did not Abimelech fear God, though Abraham thought otherwise? But the Ninevites believed God, repented, and were forgiven. No doubt these Men differed from Abraham, and Abraham from them, in some MODES of Worship; but why should they be damned for differing from Abraham, more than Abraham should be damned for differing from them in such Matters? Now his Pen runs a little too fast, who can't distinguish between Articles of Faith and Modes of Worship.*

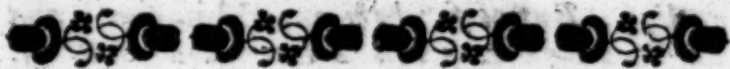
As for Melchizedeck, we know but very little of him; and we understand the less, because so many learned Men, in their Disputes, have raised such a Dust, as is enough to blind one's

* Vindic. p. 4. † Id. p. 18. ‡ p. 16.

one's Eyes. But as for him and Abimelech, and the Ninevites too, what I have said in p. 75. of the following Discourse, concerning Job and his Friends, may be applied to them, and will fully answer any Thing of a seeming Argument that may be thought to be couched in what he says of them.

I hope this Gentleman, who writes in Haste, will, at his Leisure, read what I have said, and then I do not despair but he may change his Mind; at least, that he will not proceed to fight against Christ with the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, which he, who handles at such a Rate as he has done, will find another Day, has a very sharp Edge.

But whatever he may do, I hope, what I have written will not prove unserviceable to others; that it may not, I desire those, into whose Hands this shall fall, to be serious and in earnest, and to do me the Justice to believe that I am so, while I am pleading his Cause below, who is pleading that of all the Faithful above; and by whose Merits and Intercession, I hope, ere long, to arrive at the blessed Place where he is, to be with him, and to behold his Glory.



T H E

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.

H*oly Men assent to the whole of divine Revelation, p. 1. Yet their Faith not equally exercised about all Truths; but Jesus Christ is the special Object of it, p. 3. An Account of the following Treatise, p. 5.*

C H A P. I.

T*He assenting Act of Faith, and its several Objects, p. 6.*

A Matter of great Moment, p. 11.

*The consenting Act of Faith, p. 12. The Eunuch in Acts 8. believed the Trinity, the Deity and Priesthood of Christ, p. 13. Receiving Christ, what, p. 15. The priestly Office of Christ highly esteemed, both by God and Man, p. 16. and is the prevailing Motive to accept him as King, p. 20. The Act of trusting, p. 22. This supposeth the Deity of Christ, p. 24. This is a difficult, but necessary Act of Faith, ibid. which sometimes runs
very*

The Contents.

xiii

very low in a serious Christian, p. 26. The genuine and necessary Fruits of Faith, p. 28. A double Gift of the Spirit, p. 30. A Description of Faith, p. 31. Wherever 'tis described by, or the Promise made to any single Branch of it, it must be taken in the full Latitude, p. 32. The more a Man hath of that which looks like saving, if he hath not all, or it be not of the right Kind, the sorer will his Damnation be, p. 33. Self-examination pressed as to this Matter, p. 35.

C H A P. II.

F*Aith so variously described, with regard to the Difficulties which, in those early Days, attended some Acts or Objects of Faith, p. 36. That Assertion, The Belief that Jesus is the Messiah, all that's necessary to make a Man a Christian, reflected on, p. 40. Whether Christ ever spake ANY Thing of his being a Priest, p. 41. A Regard had in the various Descriptions of Faith, to the Perplexities of Mens Consciences, p. 45. 'Tis supposed, we understand that one Act of Faith does naturally imply or infer another, and produce its proper Effects, p. 47. Scripture-language herein agreeable to the usual Way of speaking among Men, p. 51. If it had not been thus, the Scripture would have been an odd Book, p. 52. No accurate Definition of Faith in the Bible. The Effect of divine Wisdom, with respect to Ministers and People, p.*

53.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

THe Point of the Salvation of Heathens waived, p. 57. No Unbeliever among us can be saved, *ibid.* The hainous Nature of Unbelief, p. 58. No Excuse for it, that we did not see Miracles wrought, p. 61. The Prevalency of Popery, a Proof of Christianity, p. 63.

C H A P. IV.

Obj. I. **A**Bout the Kenites, p. 67. This built on a double Supposition, 1. That they were not of the same Religion with the Israelites, which probably is false, *ibid.* 2. That they were eternally saved, and that merely for their Forefathers Charity, which is not proved to be true, *ibid.*

C H A P. V.

Obj. II. **A**Bout Job and the Israelites. No Strength or Truth in it, p. 75. The Time when Job lived, p. 77. When the Life of Man began to be shortned, p. 78, 79. The antient Faith of the Israelites, p. 81. The Faith of Job, p. 90.

C H A P. VI.

Obj. III. **F**rom Micah vi. 8. The Vindicator a downright Infidel, p. 94. Different Abstracts of our Duty in the holy Scriptures, p. 96. We must not take one of these to
the

The Contents.

xv

the Exclusion of all the rest, much less of the fuller Descriptions of our Duty in other Parts of the Bible, p. 101. When only one or a few Duties are mentioned, much more is implied, p. 103. Humility would be a Means to Faith, p. 104. When the Jews began to be liable to Damnation for not believing the Gospel, p. 105. The Charge of Want of Charity answered, p. 106.

C H A P. VII.

Obj. IV. *That Works of Charity are the only ones mentioned in Matt. xxv. p. 107.*

An. *It would be good News for the vilest Men, if this Argument had any Thing in it, p. 108. The Proceedings of the last Day mentioned in many other Places, p. 109. Whether Justice is necessarily included in Beneficence, p. 110: Other Things enquired after at the last Day, besides Acts of Charity, p. 111.*

C H A P. VIII.

Obj. V. *From our Saviour's Answer to the Lawyer, p. 112. The Weakness of this Argument, p. 113. The true Meaning of Christ's Direction to the Lawyer and the young Man, enquired into, p. 115. The Jews thought bare external Obedience to one or a few Commandments, sufficient to Salvation, p. 116. Christ refers them to the whole Law of God, p. 117. His Direction capable of an evangelical Sense, p. 119. and is a Gospel Answer,*

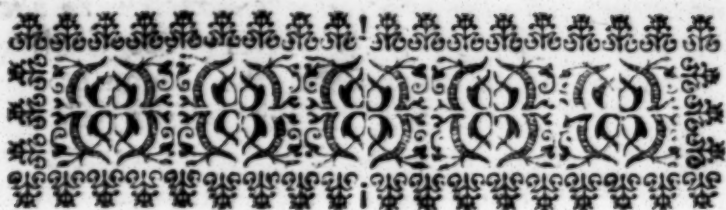
swer, if we consider the State of Affairs, ibid. and understand it in its due Latitude, p. 122. Whether I would give the same Direction to a serious Enquirer, p. 124, 125. Christ's Direction capable of a legal Sense, p. 126.

C H A P. IX.

Obj. VI. **F**rom Acts x. 34, 35. p. 128. Cornelius could not have been saved when Christ was preached to him, if he had not believed in him, p. 129. A bold Saying, that Faith is but a lucky Way of thinking, animadverted on, p. 132. and a popish Legend about JUDAS in Hell, p. 133.

The Close.

Stedfastness in the Faith of the Gospel urged, p. 136. Which must be operative and practical, p. 137. An Exhortation to Charity, p. 139. Timothy ordered to give rich Men a Charge about this, ibid. Who are rich, p. 143. They must give liberally, p. 144. 'Tis a Sign of the Truth of those Graces that are necessary to Salvation, p. 146. And a Means necessary to it, p. 148. Covetous Men ranked among the vilest Sinners, p. 149.



A
 DISCOURSE
 OF
Faith in Jesus Christ.



The INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

DIVINE Faith, consider'd as an Act or Habit, is the Assent of the Mind to a Thing as true upon the Authority of God revealing it. Holy Men so assent to every Thing, which they are convinc'd that he hath said. What the Apostle professes of himself, was not peculiar to
 A him

The Introduction.

him alone, *I worship the God of my Fathers, believing all Things which are written in the Law and the Prophets* *. Every true Christian doth as much; nay, since the Canon of the Scripture is completed, he doth *more*; for he believes all that is written by the Evangelists and Apostles too, who have given the finishing Stroke to divine Revelation. He unfeignedly assents to the Word of God, the whole and every Part thereof; to its Histories and Prophecies, Mysteries and Commands, Threatnings and Promises.

SECTION II.

True indeed, holy Men may err; and, 'tis plain, many of 'em do; for they are of contrary Perswasions, and all of them can't be in the Right. There are some Truths in the holy Scriptures of a lower Nature, which they do not *explicitely* assent unto, because through the Smalness of the Print, Want of Light, or the Weakness of their Eyes, they cannot see 'em there. However, all sincere Christians do agree in all the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, and have a *virtual* Belief of all the other Points. For as the Waters of a River that branches forth into different Streams, and runs in various Channels, were once united in one common Fountain; so all true Believers, tho' unhappily divided into divers Perswasions, yet do unanimously center in this as their common Principle, That whatsoever God saith in his holy Word,
must

* Acts xxiv. 14.

The Introduction.

3

must needs be true, and cannot be false; and therefore they are ready to embrace what they now reject, as soon as they discern the Stamp of divine Authority upon it.

SECTION III.

But yet sincere Christians do not *equally* exercise their Faith about all the Truths that are written in the Bible. Their Eye is in a peculiar Manner fixed with Attention and Delight on those Parts, of it which relate to our Lord Jesus Christ, his Person, Natures, Mediation, and the Promises of Grace and Mercy through him. This is evident from the different *Nature* of those Truths, and the State of *their Case* who do believe.

From the different *Nature* of those Truths. 'Tis revealed who betrayed our Saviour, and under whom he was crucified. But no Man can suppose these Points are of equal Importance with that of his *dying for our Sins*, unless he will set *Judas* and *Pontius Pilate* on the Level with his Saviour, and think he is as much beholden to the Treachery of the one, and the Cowardice of the other, as he is to the Merits of the Son of God: Or, (seeing that also is revealed, that two Malefactors were put to Death with him) that he is as much concern'd to *look upon one or both of the Thieves*, as upon a dying Jesus, that so he may be saved.

This is further evident from the State of their *Case* who do believe: They are convinced Sinners, who know themselves to be guilty before God, and in Danger of Hell-fire. Conversion

and Faith begin in *legal* Convictions: You may more rationally expect to find Paradise on the Top of a craggy Rock, than saving Faith in the stony Heart of an unhumbled Sinner. And these legal Convictions issue in *evangelical* ones, which always remain after the great Work is wrought; as when a Statuary cuts the rough Marble to form it into a beautiful Image, the Impressions he made upon it do still abide after the Statue is completed. Believers industriously preserve a quick and tender Sense of Sin in their Souls, and when they find they grow dull and stupid, they are uneasy under it, as a Man is when his Limbs begin to grow numm'd and dead.

Now, what Part of the Word of God is most proper to be presented to a Man under these Circumstances? Will you turn him to its *Histories* and *Prophecies*? These, tho' fit Objects for him at other Times to exercise his deepest Thoughts upon, yet are no more suited to the present State of an awaken'd and trembling Sinner, than the melodious Sounds of Musick to a groning and dying Man. Or will you set before him the *Commands* of the Law? These he knows he hath grievously broken, and the View of them is like a Man's seeing the dead Body, or the walking Ghost of the Person whom he hath cruelly murdered, which presently puts him into great Disorder and Confusion.

Will you read to him the *Threatnings* of the Law? These are they that have disquieted him; and to set these in Order before him, is

The Introduction.

5

as if a Magistrate should afresh bring forth before the Offender, that very *Rack* on which he hath already endured the sharpest Pains: The mere Sight of the *Engine* is enough to terrify and torment him anew, and save the Executioner any further Labour.

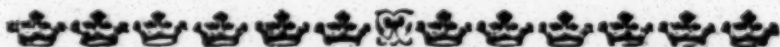
But now, do but discourse to this Man concerning the Mediator, and the Promises of Grace and Mercy through him; as if you had the Power of working Miracles, you *raise the Dead*, and give a new Life to the drooping Soul. All this is wrought not by your own Power, but by the *Name of Jesus*; so much Virtue is there in that one Word, *A Saviour*.

A condemned Criminal beholds the common Spectators, the Gibbet, the Executioner, and his dear Friend who brings him a Pardon in his Hand, with one and the same Eye; but 'tis easy to determine, which of all these he doth fix it upon with the greatest Steadiness and Delight.

SECTION IV.

I hope what hath been said, is sufficient to prepare the Reader to peruse the following Discourse with Seriousness and Attention, about *Faith*, as terminated on *our Lord Jesus Christ*. Which being a Point of great Weight and Moment as to his present Peace and future Happiness, I shall endeavour to set it in the clearest Light I can: And in order thereunto, I will explain its Nature, by bringing together the several Descriptions of it, which we meet with

in the Scriptures, and shew the Reasons why we have so many and so different ones there. And then I will prove its Necessity to Salvation, and answer the several Pleas for the Sufficiency of bare Morality, or mere-Charity, which have been advanced of late by some modern Authors, who represent *Faith in Christ* as a very insignificant Thing: By which it is easy to guess what Thoughts they have of *him*, who is the Object of it. They have impiously endeavour'd to degrade the Son of God into a *mere Man*; and their Malice does not stop there, but they attempt to sink him into a *Cypher* too.



C H A P. I.

Of the Nature of Faith in Jesus Christ.

IF we consult the holy Scriptures, we shall find in them very different Accounts of Faith in Jesus Christ. Sometimes it is described by its several *Acts*, at other Times by its genuine *Fruits*. I will consider both, and by drawing together what is scatter'd up and down in many Places, endeavour to form a true and full Notion of it.

And *First*, I will consider the several Acts of Faith. They are Three,

Assent, Consent, and Reliance.

S E C.

SECTION I.

I. There is the Act of *Assent*. Which is a Perswasion of the Truth of all those Things laid down in the holy Scriptures concerning Christ, on the Account of divine Authority revealing them to us. And as these are many, accordingly this Act of Faith is variously described.

Sometimes by our Assent to this grand Truth, That he is God's own Son: *Who is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God * ?*

Sometimes by our Assent to his Incarnation: *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God †. i. e.* provided that Confession springs from an inward Perswasion of it; or else a Man is acted by no other than the unclean Spirit, and is of the *Devil*, and not of God; for he tells a Lie while he confesses the Truth.

Sometimes by our Assent to this, That Jesus of Nazareth is the *Messiah*, or the *Christ*, *i. e.* appointed of God to be the great Prophet, the High Priest, and universal King: *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God ‡.* And St. *John* tells us, this was his End in writing his Gospel, that Men might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ||. Which thereupon we may reasonably suppose is

A 4

2

* 1 *John* v. 5. See also *John* xx. 31. *Acts* viii. 37. † 1 *John* iv. 2. ‡ 1 *John* v. 1. || *John* xx. 31.

a very weighty Point. He makes, or rather shews himself to be a *little Man*, who chooses a little Subject ; no wise Author will do this, much less an inspired one, under the Conduct of the Spirit of Wisdom. And the End he proposed was suitable to the Argument he insisted on, *viz.* That *believing this, ye might have Life through his Name.* Whence it is clear, that this is at least one Part of saving Faith.

Sometimes Faith is set forth by a Perswasion of this, That he was actually sent of God ; and tho' he arrived *incognito*, and made not a publick and splendid Entrance into *Jerusalem*, yet he was really that great Ambassador, whom they had so passionately expected a long Time. So in those Words of our blessed Lord himself, *I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me **. And *Martha* joins three Articles together in the Profession of her Faith, *I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the World †.*

Sometimes Faith is described, by giving Credit to him as revealing the Will of God : *He speaketh what he hath known and heard, and no Man receives his Testimony. He that receiveth his Testimony, hath set to his Seal that God is true ; for he whom God hath sent, speaketh the Words of God ‡.* Which is presently explained thus, *He that believeth on the Son*

* *John xi. 42.* See also *John xvii. 8.* † *John xi. 27.* ‡ *John iii. 32, 33.*

*Son of God, hath eternal Life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life *.*

Sometimes Faith is set forth by an Assent to the Death of Christ as a Sacrifice, his Burial and Resurrection. So St. Paul, when he refreshes the Memories of the *Corinthians* about the Gospel they had heard from him, *By which also* (saith he) *ye are saved, if ye keep in Memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain †.* And what are the Articles which were the Subject of his Sermons, and the Objects of their Faith? They immediately follow, *For I delivered unto you first of all, how that Christ died for our Sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third Day according to the Scriptures.* So saith the same Apostle in another Place, *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy Heart, that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved ‡.* This Faith is ultimately terminated in the Father, yet the Son is not excluded, he being meant in the following Words, *For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed ||.* And, *This Faith shall be imputed for Righteousness **.*

Sometimes Faith is described by an Assent to his Deity and Sovereignty. When *Thomas* said to him, *My Lord, and my God,* Jesus

A 5

replied,

* *John* iii. 36. † *1 Cor.* xv. 1, 2. ‡ *Rem.* x. 9.
 || *Rom.* x. 11. * *Rom.* iv. 23, 24, 25.

replied, Thomas, *because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed* *. *viz.* Not only that I am risen from the Dead, but also what thou hast thereupon declared, that I am both *Lord and God*. And 'tis the great Design of the Apostle throughout the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, to confirm those who began to waver, in both the Parts of his Priestly Office, his Death and Intercession.

In a Word, 'tis also described by our Assent to these Truths concerning him, That Forgiveness of Sins is to be had through his Name alone; that he will raise the Dead, and judge the World, and bestow eternal Life on all his faithful Followers. Thus the Apostle severely censures those *Judaizers*, who were for setting up the Law of *Moses*, pleading its Necessity and Sufficiency to Salvation, without any Need of the Sacrifice of Christ, as Persons that had *perverted the true Gospel of Christ*, and were *turned to another Gospel*, but a false one †; tells them, that Christ should *not profit them at all*, was become of *no Effect* to them ‡; they *frustrated the Grace of God*, made Christ to have died *in vain* ||; and then sure they cannot be thought to believe in him to Salvation. *I am the Resurrection and the Life*, saith he, *and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die* *, (or, as it should be rendred ††, *shall*

* *John* xx. 28, 29. † *Gal.* i. 6, 7, 8. ‡ *Gal.* ii. 21. || *Gal.* v. 2, 4. * * *John* xi. 25, 26. †† ἐν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ τις τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

Faith in Jesus Christ.

11

shall not die for ever.) Martha, believest thou this? And, saith the Apostle, this is the Witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son: He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the Witness in himself: He that believeth not God, hath made him a Liar, because he believeth not the Record that God gave of his Son. And this is the Record, that God hath given to us eternal Life; and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life.*

This is the first Act of Faith, viz. assenting to the Truths revealed in the Scripture concerning Christ on divine Authority; and how slightly soever some unwary Men have spoken of it, 'tis a Matter of vast Consequence. This is a Foundation-stone, and had need to be deeply laid, and carefully look'd after; for the whole Building doth lean upon it, and is supported by it. The other Acts of saving Faith, and the Whole of practical Christianity, are virtually contained in it, and deducible from it by the Influences of the Spirit; as the Scent, Leaves, Colour, Fruit, and Branches of a Tree, are virtually in the narrow Compass of a small Seed, and spring up from it, when duly water'd with the Showers of Heaven, and cherish'd by the Beams of the Sun. The Devil is aware of this, and therefore he doth so often assault us in this Part, subtilly undermines, and sorely makes

A 6

it,

* 1 John v. 10, 11, 12.

it, especially at this Day. 'Tis our Interest to strengthen the Place where he makes so vigorous an Attack: So by learning the *Wisdom* of the old Serpent, we shall happily escape his *Sting*. Too many profess the Christian Faith, only because 'tis the Religion of their Country, (and they must be in the *Fashion*.) 'Twas the Way of their Fathers, and they have it as they have other Things, *ex traduce*. They were bred up in it from their Infancy; and one would think that were but a very little while ago, for in Knowledge they are Children still. In such a Nation as this is, it would be a Reproach and Shame to them not to do so, and that is all they have to say for it, and so they are easily turn'd to be *Socinians*, *Deists*, and *Atheists*, or what you please; for they are pliable as the first Matter that is ready for any Shape; or, like soft Wax, which tho' wrought into the Figure of an Angel, yet with a warm Hand, and a very little Skill and Pains, is moulded into the Form of a Devil. I would advise the Reader to study the rational Evidences and Proofs of the Truth of Christianity, and he will find this to be like watering the Tree at the Root:

SECTION II.

II. Besides the Assenting, there is the consenting Act of Faith, which is a serious Choice and Acceptance of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King, to do the whole Work of a Redeemer upon us, to be all that to us, and do all that for us which God hath appointed him to be to, and do for wretched Sinners; and in order whereunto,

unto, he hath invested him in that threefold Office. The Faith of a Philosopher is confined to his Understanding, that of a Christian reaches to his Will; like the Soul in which it is rooted, it dwells in Head and Heart too at the same Time. *What hinders but I may be baptized* *? said the Eunuch. To which Philip replies, *If thou believest with all thy Heart, thou mayst.* Whereunto he answers, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, and thereupon he was baptized. The Son of God, and the Messiah, (or the Christ) though they are different Terms, and signify different Things, (the former his Deity and Equality with the Father, the latter his solemn Designation and Appointment to the Office and Work of a Redeemer) yet they belong to one and the same Person, and so were understood to do in those Days. The Eunuch therefore by professing his Faith in him as the Son of God, doth thereby own him to be the Messiah, *i. e.* to be solemnly invested in the Office of a Prophet, and of a King, and of a Priest too. The two former of these are not denied; if they were, 'tis easy enough to prove his Faith in Jesus of Nazareth as Prophet and King, as from other Topicks, so from his being baptized into his Name. As also his Belief of the Trinity, because Baptism is expressly required to be administered in the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost. But a f modern Author seems to deny his Faith in him as

2

* Acts viii. 37, 38. † Reas. of Christianity.

a Priest. But that I think may be proved too, if we do but consider what he was doing, when *Philip* reach'd him. He was reading this Part of the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, *He was led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, and like a Lamb dumb before the Shearers, so open'd he not his Mouth: In his Humiliation his Judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his Generation? For his Life is taken from the Earth.* And being at a Loss, he enquires, whether the Prophet spoke this of himself, or of some other. Then *Philip* began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him *Jesus* *. He preached *Jesus* unto him from the liii. of *Isaiah*, shewing how that Prophecy agreed only to him. This Eunuch was a very devout Man, as appears by his travelling on the account of Religion from *Ethiopia* to *Jerusalem*, notwithstanding he was a great Minister of State; and his reading his Bible in his Return, while he was on the Road in his Chariot, is Demonstration how much he thirsted after a better *Treasure* than any his Queen had committed to his Charge, that of divine Knowledge I mean. Whereupon, tho' when *Philip* was got to him, he was about the Middle of the Chapter, we have Reason to believe, he would enquire into the Sense of the foregoing Verses, which apparently treat of the same Argument, and have so close a Connection with what he was reading at that Instant, and desired to be explained to him; and
little

* *Acts* viii. 32, 33, 34, 35.

little Question is to be made, but that *Philip* expounded them to him also. Hereupon by *Baptism* he was admitted into the Christian Church, and consequently was baptized into the Death of Christ, and believed on him, as offering himself up a Sacrifice for Sin, else his Faith had not been answerable to the Sermon he heard, or the Ordinance he desired. *For know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death* * ?

In another Place of Scripture, Mention is made of the consenting Act of Faith under the Name of *Receiving*. *As many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believed on him* †.

This is a relative Term, and doth necessarily suppose a previous Mission, or a foregoing Offer. What is not sent, or offer'd me, I may snatch at, or seize by Violence ; but I can't properly be said to *receive*. God has sent his Son, to be the Prophet, Priest, and King of his Church, and so does he offer him to us in his holy Word ; and so must we receive him, not *physically*, but in the *moral* Sense, *i. e.* our Souls must consent unto him as such. We must, as humble Disciples, apply to him as our Teacher ; as guilty Creatures, betake our selves to him as our Priest and Advocate ; and, as obedient Subjects, submit to him as our sovereign Lord.

Now,

* Rom. vi. 3. † John i. 12.

Now, tho' all these three Offices render him a complete Redeemer, which he would not have been, had he wanted any one of them; and tho' they have a mutual Dependence upon, run into, and make Way one for the other: And a serious Christian admires him in all of them, which Way soever he views him in any (true) Light, he discovers a Beauty and Glory in him; yet in a peculiar Manner his *priestly* Office is very highly esteemed both by God and Man.

'Tis of great Account with God. It was darkly hinted in the first Promise about the *bruising his Heel*. This was written of him in the *Volume of his Book* *, or, as the Word signifies, in the Front, at the very Beginning, yea, and almost in every Page of it too; for *his Sufferings* God *had shewed before by the Mouth of all his Prophets* †. So grateful was it to him, that he delighted in Sacrifices, because they were Figures and Representations of it. He would have this Office typified by a twofold Order of Priesthood, that of *Aaron*, and of *Melchizedeck* too. God counted it an Honour to his own Son. *He glorified not himself*, but the Father did, when he *made him an High Priest* ‡. He settled him in this Office by a solemn Oath ||, which doth imply our great Backwardness by Nature to accept him as such, that he shall never be turned out of it to make

* *Psal.* xl. 7. † *Acts* iii. 18. ‡ *Heb.* v. 5. || *Psal.* cx. 4.

make Way for another to succeed, and also the great Weight and Moment of it. For he who hath forbidden us to swear in light and trivial Affairs, would not be guilty of it himself. Many Promises were made to him of * Assistance, of a † Seed to serve him, and of kingly ‡ Power and Glory, as his Encouragement to go thro' the Difficulties of it. And for his so doing, the whole Host of Heaven will || admire and adore him for ever, tho' the Knees of our modern *Unitarians* are too stiff to bend to him.

And no Wonder then that this Office of his is so highly esteemed by serious Christians, who are taught of God, and are Imitators of him. I shewed in the *Introduction*, that of all the *Truths* revealed in the Scripture, those which relate to our *Lord Jesus Christ* †† are in a peculiar Manner eyed by a Believer, as most suitable to his distressed State. 'Tis as certain, that of all the Truths relating to him, they are not those that refer to him as Teaching or Ruling, but to him as exercising his *priestly* Office, as dying and interceeding, which for the same Reason his Thoughts are first and chiefly exercised about. In this Field alone can you find the cool Spring, which affords the Waters of Life for his troubled Soul, without which, a Spirit that is weary and heavy laden would not find

* *Acts* ii. 25. † *Isa.* l. 6, 7. ‡ *Isa.* liii. 10, 11, 12. *Heb.* xii. 2. || *Rev.* v. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. †† *Psal.* v. 6, 7.

find Rest, no not in Christ himself. For, as has been already observed, Convictions of Sin and Wrath go before Faith, as in the first Creation Darkness preceeded Light, according as it is written, *The Evening and the Morning were the first Day*. And they are always maintain'd after it, tho' not in so sharp and pungent a Measure and Degree. Now, when a Man is throughly awaken'd, to what Purpose is it to tell him of Christ's being a Prophet, if you stop there? Alas! the Tidings of one that can open blind Eyes, give no Ease to a Man who hath a bleeding Heart; unless you tell him Christ hath died, that so he might by the Blood of his Cross reconcile poor Sinners to God, deliver them from present Guilt and future Vengeance. And so you borrow your healing Instructions from his priestly Office; and his propheticall one affords no Relief to a wounded Spirit but what it fetches thence. The Matter of his other Revelations of the holy Nature and Justice of God, and the Purity of his Precepts, yea, of eternal Happiness it self too, without this, will but inflame the Sore, and exasperate the Misery; for 'tis Death to see a Tree of Life guarded by a flaming Sword, turning hither and thither to keep a Man off which Way soever he moves to attempt the gathering its pleasant Fruits.

And so it will, if without mentioning this, you only tell the Man, that Christ is universal Lord and King. *If all Power in Heaven and Earth* be lodg'd in his Hands, he is the more able to tread me under his Feet. Wretched Creature

Creature that I am! who will make my Peace with the offended Majesty of Heaven, save me from the Stroke of Justice, and deliver me from the Wrath to come?

But now represent Christ to such a one, as offering himself a Sacrifice to satisfy divine Justice, and expiate the Sins of Men, and save them from Hell; this is to drop healing Balm into the raging Wound; this is what the trembling Sinner wants, and desires to have, and is far more acceptable to him than Drops of Cordial can be to one that's fainting, and ready to sink. Christ himself speaks as if the View of him on the Cross, dying for these Ends, would be a charming one, captivate Hearts, and conquer the Souls of Men. *I, when I am lifted up from the Earth, will draw all Men after me* *. And as this creates Life in an awaken'd Sinner, so it keeps it in a troubled Saint, to remember, *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is the Propitiation for our Sins* †. The latter of these (which is also the Ground of the former, for therefore is he our Advocate, because he has been our Propitiation) is the Price, the Basis and Foundation of all saving Benefits. We are reconciled to God by his Death, have Remission of Sins, and are justified through his Blood. If he had not thus gone away, the Spirit had not been given. Deliverance from Condemnation and Hell, Freedom

* *John* xii. 32. † *1 John* ii. 2.

dom of Access to God in all Cases, Supply of all our Wants, Pity and Help under all our Distresses and Temptations, new Supplies of recovering Grace, and a fresh Pardon, Peace of Conscience, Perseverance in Faith and Holiness, and, after all, the Crown of eternal Life. All these beautiful Flowers do spring from this Root.

And this is the prevailing Motive with a Man to accept of Christ as his King, that then he will be his Priest, but otherwise he will not. While Men are at Ease, they will not come to him for it. His Yoke is too pinching and galling for their tender Necks; his Burden presses with such a Weight, that their Shoulders cannot bear it. But when once they are thoroughly alarmed with a Sense of their Danger, and find that his Blood is the only Ransom whereby they can be preserved from going down to the Pit; and they are told, if they will have him for their Saviour, they must accept him for their Ruler; this at length makes them yield. 'Tis with them as with the *Israelites*, when they were sorely harassed by the *Ammonites*, they apply themselves to *Jephthah*, to deliver them from their great Oppression. He saith to them, *Shall I be your Head* * then? This they readily comply with, *The Lord be Witness between us, if we do not so according to thy Word* †. Blessed Jesus, I stick at no Terms, I give thee a *Blank*, write down thy own Conditions, require what thou

* *Judg.* xi. 4, 5, &c. † *Ver.* 9, 10.

thou wilt, only save me from eternal Ruin, on the Brink whereof I stand.

And thus the Proposal of Christ in the Gospel is admirably fitted to work upon Men, and draw them to him in a rational Way. For hereby an Offer is made of those Blessings (Pardon and Salvation by the Blood of Christ) which, as *miserable* Creatures, we need, and, as *reasonable* Creatures, we cannot but earnestly desire, provided we will submit to that other Office of Christ, which, as *sinful* Creatures, we are very much averse unto; but if we will not do the latter, we shall never enjoy the former.

But the Matter doth not stop here. If this be the standing Sense of a Man's Heart, I hate this Holiness, I do by no Means like this Obedience, only such is the Necessity of my Case, that of Two Evils I will chuse the least; this is not a right Work, nor will it prove a lasting one. And that's the Reason why so many, who on their sick Beds seem to embrace Christ in all his Offices, become vile Rebels again as soon as their Disease and their Fears are over. If a Man prove a true Believer, the Spirit of God goes on, and shews him a Loathsomeness in Sin, as well as the Danger of it, to which he feels a strong Propension, like a dead Weight within. The holy Ghost enlightens him about the Beauty of Holiness, and the Goodness of Obedience, as well as the Reward of it, and makes him deeply sensible of his own natural Averseness to it. Hereupon he sees an Amiability in, as well as the Necessity of the kingly Office of Christ.

Christ. Here's one whose Business it is to subdue the Enmity of my Heart, which, though I am sick of, yet I cannot shake off my Disease, but carry it with me wherever I go; to beat down my Corruptions, that run with a Stream too strong for me to oppose, so that my Vessel is easily driven down before it; *to write his Law in my Heart, put his Fear and Spirit into my inward Parts, and cause me to walk in his Statutes.* Him hath God exalted to bestow *Repentance* * upon Men. So that hereupon there's nothing distasteful in Christ, every Thing in him is lovely and necessary. The Man needs all, and is glad of all; whereupon he opens to him, and joyfully entertains him as Prophet, Priest, and King too; and when he doth so in Sincerity, he is a true Believer, if thereunto be added,

SECTION III.

III. *Reliance* upon him (which is the Third Act of saving Faith;) Dependence upon his Righteousness, Death, and Sacrifice, as the only procuring meritorious Cause of Pardon, Grace, and eternal Life. I say, the *only* procuring *meritorious Cause*; for there is no other. And he who puts his Confidence in any Person or Thing besides, *as a meritorious Cause*, will find it to be a fatal Error. If a Man set one Foot on a Rock, and the other on a Quicksand, the latter, that

* *Acts* v. 31.

that is so ill placed, will sink, and draw the whole Body after it. Hence we read so often of * trusting in Christ. And a true Believer is described as one that *flies † for Refuge, to lay hold on the Hope that is set before him*. Fleeing implies some Sense of Danger, and some glimmering Hopes (at least) of a Possibility of Safety; for Fear and Hope are the Two Wings on which a Soul does fly. That which a Sinner is in Danger of being seized by, is the Justice of God; whereupon he hasteth away to Christ as his strong Hold, where alone he can be safe. This Act of Faith is sometimes expressed by the *committing ‡ our Souls unto him*, at other Times by resting, staying, leaning upon, and laying Hold on, and apprehending him, because a Dependence on the Merits and Death of Christ, gives the same Ease to an awakened Mind and troubled Soul, as those Actions do to the Bodies of Men, when they are ready to faint and sink. And hence we read of God's *setting him forth as a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins **; and of *submitting our selves to his Righteousness, not establishing our own †*.

Now, because some have talked very indiscreetly, whence others have taken Occasion to write very profanely of this Act of Faith, I shall

* Psal. ii. 12. Eph. i. 12. † Hebr. vi. 18. ‡ 2 Tim. i. 12. * Rom. iii. 25, 26. † Rom. x. 3.

shall speak a little to it in these Five following Particulars.

1. It supposes a stedfast Perswasion of the Deity of Christ; for if he were a mere Creature, though ever so excellent an one, no Man could rationally expect to be blessed by putting his Trust in him for Pardon, Grace and Glory, as long as he has his Reason about him, and his Bible in his Hand, wherein it is written, *Cursed is he that trusteth in Man, and that maketh Flesh his Arm* *. Christ must be trusted in by us, both living and dying. Now a considering Man would tremble at the Thought of being guilty of Idolatry and Creature-worship all his Life long, especially making that his last and concluding Act, which there is no Possibility for him to repent of. He would not dare to give the Glory of a jealous God to another, just as he is going to his Bar to receive an unchangeable Sentence from his Mouth.

2. 'Tis a very difficult Act of Faith. The best of Men, who have had many Experiences of very extraordinary Supplies, yet, when new Straits and Difficulties come upon them, find it very hard to trust God for their Bodies, for a few Morsels of Bread, and a little Clothing, for themselves and their Children. How many unbelieving Thoughts rise in them upon a fresh Trial! They could never have thought there had been so much of this evil Principle in them. But the Tide running out, and

* Jer. xvii. 5.

and the Chancel being almost dry (they being reduced to great Extremity) the Mud and Filth is easily seen, which lay hid before. How much harder is it for a Sinner, under the Condemnation of God's Law, and his own Conscience, to trust in Christ, whom he never saw, whom he has never yet tried, for Pardon and eternal Life, to put his Soul into his Hands, lay the Weight and Strefs of his everlasting Concerns on him, and renouncing every thing else, to venture his All in this single Bottom, especially to do so in a dying Hour, when a Man is in the near View and Prospect of Eternity, and hath a very lively Sense of the Justice, Holiness, and Majesty of that God, before whose Tribunal he is immediately to appear!

3. And as this is a difficult, so 'tis a noble Act of Faith too, whereby Christ is highly glorified; for, in doing thus, we practically declare, in Despight of all Discouragements, that we are firmly perswaded of his Love and Grace, Faithfulness and Power, the Merits of his Blood, the Value of his Intercession, and the Truth of his Promises, and set our Seal to the Record given of him in the Word, that he *is able to save to the utmost, all that come to God through him* *, and he *will not cast out any* † that seriously apply themselves unto him. And as it is a noble, so,

4. This is a necessary Act of Faith; for when a Man sees himself in Danger of eternal Ruin,

B

and

* Heb. vii. 25. † John vi. 37.

and knows he hath none other besides Christ to trust unto, if he don't rely upon him, his Heart must sink in Despair like a Stone in the Water. A single Man in a poor shattered leaky Vessel, in a dark Night, far remote from the very Sight of Land, in the Midst of a tempestuous Sea, whose foming Waves are furiously dashing upon it, so that on every side 'tis continually sucking in Water, without Pump, or Sails, or Pilot, is but a very faint Emblem of such a Person, who, under a quick Sense of his own Sins, and the Wrath of God, hath nothing at all on which to depend. And yet,

5. This Act of Faith sometimes runs very low with a serious Christian. It may be so on a Man's first Believing, and sometimes a great while after, in an Hour of spiritual Darknes and Desertion, whereupon, if we could but stand at his Closet-door, we might over-hear him breaking forth in some such Language as this, *My Sins are many, and my Danger is great, and my Fears are proportionable to both. What will become of me to all Eternity, God only knows. But yet however, there is Salvation for lost Sinners through the Blood of a Redeemer, though I am so far from having an Assurance of an Interest in it, that I am terribly afraid I never shall. Many Discouragements break in like Wave after Wave on my distressed Soul, and I have much ado to keep my Head above Water, yea, it is often covered by it; yet I see a safe Harbour, but, Lord, at how great a Distance am I from it, so that I can but just perceize it! Oh that I could but swim to it!*

Well,

Faith in Jesus Christ. 27

Well, I will make towards it, though I fear I shall sink long before I reach it. But however, I'll try what rich, sovereign, free Grace will do. If I am indeed the vilest Sinner that ever was, then Christ never yet had so fair an Opportunity of shewing his tender Love, his infinite Power, his unshaken Faithfulness, and the Value and Efficacy of his Blood, in all their Beauty and Glory, as now he has. What tho' I am an obscure Person, and should never have the Opportunity of publishing it on Earth? yet it will not die as a Secret in my Bosom. The happy Tidings will run through the Heavens, and the blessed Inhabitants above will wonder at his exceeding abundant Grace overflowing to me, and sing Hallelujahs to the Lamb of God on my Account. And though Christ, at the last Day, will be admired and glorified in all his Saints, yet, if I be found among them, I shall more signally adorn his Triumph than any one besides. I will therefore venture into his Presence, cast myself into the Arms of his Mercy: But that's too proud and saucy a Word, I would rather say, I will throw myself at his Foot. If he spurn me away, I can but die then. But it may be he may stretch out the Sceptre of his Grace to me, and then I shall live. And who can tell but he will? but if not, If I perish, I perish. So I must, if I do not apply to him. Therefore, though he should slay me, I will put my Trust in him. If I die, I'll die laying Hold on the Horns of this Altar. If ever Help come, I know it must be in this Way. Here therefore I am resolved to abide, come on't

what will, I'll wait the Issue of it, and see how it may please the most compassionate Lover of Souls to deal with mine.

This single Cord many Times hath a Soul to bear it up, and 'tis often ready to break, or he to let go his Hold of it. Such an one indeed is not in a very comfortable, yet he is in a safe Condition; and if he continue thus looking towards Christ, waiting upon him, and resigning to him, he shall be dealt with as a true Believer. Although he seem to have no Faith, and others may think he hath but little of it; yet I must say his Faith bears some Proportion to his Discouragements, for it prevails over them, and therefore it is great, because they are evidently so. Surely that is no inconsiderable Taper, which, being born in the open Air and high Wind, trembles and wavers this Way and that, so that one would expect every Moment it should be puffed out, yet burns on, tho' it gives no great Light and Comfort to the poor Traveller who carries it in his Hand.

SECTION IV.

These are the several Acts of Faith. But now, that we may not deceive our selves to our Ruin, there is another Point to be spoken to, *viz. The genuine Fruits, and necessary Effects of it.* 'Tis a Grace that purifies the Heart, cleanses the Life, overcomes the World, is a vital Spring and Principle of all Manner of holy Obedience. St. James hath spoken so full and plain to this Purpose, that some Men will never
for-

forgive him *. He calls him a *vain Man*, who sets up for Faith, if he hath not good Works as his *Credentials*. 'Tis but *saying* † he has it. He will not allow it to be called by that Name. He compares it to the hypocritical Wishes of a covetous Worldling, who, when he has the good Things of this Life in Store by him, only faith to his needy Brother, *Be thou warmed and filled* ‡, but gives him nothing but his empty farewell Blessing of *Depart in Peace*, and is glad he can be so rid of him. Such empty Words are not the Virtue of Charity; nor is an idle Flourish about Religion, or a dead Assent, the Grace of Faith, no more than a Carcase is a Man. For, *as the Body without the Spirit is dead, so is Faith also without Works* *. It will not profit a Man, and it cannot save him. 'Tis no better than a gilded Vaniry, or a painted Bubble, that will please none but a Child or a Fool.

There was a Faith in the Power of Christ, which they who wanted were not healed by him of their bodily Diseases. *He did not many of his mighty Works in his own Country* †. What should be the Reason of that? their own native Air is wont to revive others, when they are almost wasted away to nothing. Surely *his* had not so malignant an Influence as to dispirit and enfeeble him. But this happened *because of their Unbelief*. If no Cure be wrought on our Souls, if the unclean

B 3

Spirit

* James ii. 20. † Ver. 14. ‡ Ver. 15, 16. * Ver. 26. † Matth. xiii. 58.

Spirit be not cast out of our Hearts, if we remain dead in Trespases and Sins, it does proceed from the same Cause, and is a plain Argument, that the Faith of God's Elect hath not been wrought in us.

We read in the Scriptures of a two-fold Pouring out of the holy Spirit. One before Faith, in order to the working of it, which proceeds from Christ as a *designed Head*, for the enlightning of dark Minds, the quickning of dead Souls, and drawing unwilling ones to himself, that they may be made living Members of his mystical Body, as Virtue goes forth from the Load stone, to attract the distant Iron. But then, after this, there is a solemn Bestowing of the Spirit by Christ as an *actual Head*, on those who by saving Faith are united to him. Our Saviour speaks of this royal Gift of his, in those Words, *He that believes on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive* *, as the Evangelist interprets that Speech of his. And, saith the Apostle to the *Ephesians*, *In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of Promise* †. The Seal of a Prince sometimes has his own Image upon it. The holy Spirit of Christ had impressed his Likeness on them, as a Token of their being separated to be his. And *the Blessing of Abraham is come on the Gentiles through Jesus*

* *John* vii. 38, 39. † *Eph.* i. 13.

Jesus Christ, and so we receive the Promise of the Spirit (i. e. the Spirit promised) through Faith in him *. The holy Ghost then takes Charge of them as Christ's Members, possesses and acts them for him, secures and promotes his Interest in them, restrains them from Sin, strengthens them against Temptations, quickens them to Duty, and helps them in it, and leads them in the Way of Holiness, till he hath safely conducted them into the Presence of Christ in Heaven. Which is so certain a Truth, that the Apostle doth not scruple to say, That *he who has not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his* †. Now he who is in the Flesh, and walks after it, is not under the holy Ghost's Conduct, and consequently is not a true Believer on Christ, whatever he may seem to be.

Now from what has been said, we may easily form in our Minds a right and full Notion of Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. *'Tis such an Assent to the Truths laid down in the Scriptures concerning Christ, on the Account of divine Authority revealing them; and such a Consent to him thereupon as Prophet, Priest and King, together with such a Reliance on his Merits, as is productive of universal sincere Obedience, both in Heart and Life.*

And now, since the Power of Self-reflection is the peculiar Dignity of our Nature, whereby we are advanced above the Rank of Brutes, I beseech my Reader to shew himself *a Man*, by

B 4

consider-

* Gal. ii. 14. † Rom. viii. 9.

considering whether he be a Christian, and seriously examine himself, whether this Grace, thus described, has been wrought in him. To provoke him to it, I have a double Motive to lay before him.

1. Wherever Faith is described by, or the Promise of Pardon and Life made to any single Part or Branch, it must be taken in the full Latitude and Extent, as I have now open'd it. It must be understood *sensu composito & ceteris paribus*, i. e. provided there be all the other Parts of Faith, and that it be of the right Stamp and Kind, *a working Faith*; and that for this very plain Reason, because otherwise we put such a Sense on one Scripture, as would notoriously contradict several others. For Instance, 'tis said, *Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God* *. And *these Things are written to you, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing (this) ye might have Life through his Name* †.

This is to be taken thus, Provided a Man so assent to this Truth, as thereupon to receive him in all his Offices, and trust in him, and live in holy Obedience to him. For if it were thus to be understood, that if he merely assent to it, and live ever so wicked a Life, yet *he is born of God*; this would be to make St. John openly contradict himself, seeing elsewhere he says, *That he who is born of God, don't and*
can't

* 1 John v. 1. † John xx. 31.

can't commit Sin*, (*i. e.* live in a Course of wilful Sin) *because he is born of God, and his Seed remaineth in him.* And that such a Committer of Sin is of the Devil, and not of God. And that this is a clear Case, in *this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil.* And so the same Man, at the same Time, must be a Child of God by one Scripture, and yet a Child of the Devil by another. So if it should be thus understood, that he who assents to this Truth, that *Jesus is the Christ the Son of God*, though he lead ever so ungodly a Life, yet *believing this, he shall have Life through his Name*: This would be to make St. John fight with St. James, who tells us, such an idle Faith will not stand a Man in any stead another Day. And so one and the same Man, at one and the same Time, would be saved and damn'd by the two different Parts of the same Rule of Judgment, have a Right to eternal Life by this Scripture, and yet be doomed to eternal Death by those other innumerable Texts, which assure us, that all the Wicked shall be turned into Hell.

The same might be shewn as to trusting in Christ, and the other Branch of Faith; but this Instance may suffice. To this I'll add another Motive; and therefore,

2dly. The more a Man hath of that which looks like saving Faith, if he has not all of it, or if it be not of the right Kind, the forer will

B 5

his

* 1 John iii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

his Damnation be. How bitterly will Men complain another Day, We did pretend to believe every Thing contained in the Scriptures to be true, and yet we lived as tho' we had been sure every Word of it was false; wherefore we are justly plunged the deeper into Hell, for acting directly contrary to our own Light and Perswasion, and *holding the Truth in Unrighteousness*.

How fiercely will the never-dying Worm gnaw others, when they shall consider, we not only seemed to have the Faith of Assent, but that of Affiance too; we strongly relied on Christ as our Priest, but never submitted to him as our King. We were often told, this was wretched Presumption, and forewarned what it would come to at last; but we would not regard it, and so we fall into Hell not pitied by others, and condemned by our selves.

How loud will the Cry be among others, when they shall bethink themselves, We not only pretended to assent and rely, but to consent too; only we stuck at our darling Lust, and we are eternally ruin'd for the sake of that one Sin. We walked with Christ many a Step, and had we gone but one more we had been in the Mansions of Glory; but for want of that, we are fallen down into the Region of everlasting Horror and Despair, and are damned for being *Fools*, as well as for being *Sinners*.

And how quick and tormenting will be the Reflections of Conscience among others, when they shall say, We went further than any of these, when we lay on our sick Beds we not only

ly seemed to assent and consent, and rely, and began to obey, but verily thought we had been sincere, and were ready to fly in the Faces of those who did, with ever so much Modesty, insinuate and drop a Suspicion of us; but the Disease being perfectly removed, the Stream of corrupt Nature, that was only driven back, returned to its old Chanel; the World gained upon us again, we were intangled in our old Corruptions, and grew a great deal worse than ever, like rotten Fruit, putrifying every Day more and more. And now we are justly loaden with heavier Chains, and beat with many Stripes, and deserve to be lasht with Whips of Steel, and fiery Scorpions for ever and ever.

I hope, what has been said will make the Reader serious, and very cautious, that he don't bless himself in a Thing of Nought. If Conscience don't work now, it will, when Sickness comes, and Danger approaches. Modern Philosophers tell us very surprizing Stories concerning a mighty Spring in the Air, that when its Particles are violently compress'd together, it endeavours a Restitution to its former natural State; and the greater the oppressing Weight is, as soon as ever they can get themselves unfetter'd from it, they fly out with the greater Force. Among many other Experiments this is one *, That a Glass-bubble being Hermetically sealed, and put into the Receiver, and the surrounding Air pump'd out, that which is

B 6

impri-

* Bayl's Works, Epit. Vol. I. p. 450.

imprison'd in the Bubble will so expand, as in four Minutes Time to make it fly in Pieces, and break into Powder as small as Sand. Every Man finds somewhat like this in his own Breast. Conscience hath a native Spring in it, that will endeavour to recover its ancient Power, if oppress'd; and when it does, the greater Violence has been offer'd to it, it will return to its Throne with the greater Fury. And when the Sinner is *empty* of all his outward Comforts wherewith he is now encompassed on every Side, all his present Peace, which is as thin, contemptible and brittle as a Glass-bubble, will be utterly shiver'd in Pieces by the Workings of that mighty Principle within: And awake it will in the Hour of Death, or to be sure the next Moment after, whereupon the pleasant Dreams of him, who was not a sound and thorough Believer, will be gone for ever. Men will find at last, that Peace spoken by the Father of Lies will not prove true, and Comfort fetch'd from Hell, will end and leave the Fool there.



C H A P. II.

Of the Reasons of so different Accounts of Faith in the holy Scriptures.

THE foregoing Chapter affords sufficient Ground for what must be the Subject of this, *viz.* to give the Reasons why Faith in Jesus

Jesus Christ is thus differently described in the Scriptures ; sometimes by one Act or Object, sometimes by another, and sometimes by its Fruits and Effects. I will answer this Enquiry in the following Particulars.

SECTION I.

The sacred Penmen had a Respect to the different State of Affairs in their Days, *viz.* the great Difficulties which attended some Acts or Objects of Faith, and the sad Perplexities of Conscience which awaken'd Sinners labour'd under.

1. They had a Respect to the great Difficulties which some Acts or Objects of Faith were incumber'd with ; and that on various Accounts.

Some Articles of Faith were *new*, and seem'd very *improbable* at first View. This for Instance, That Jesus of *Nazareth* was the promised Messiah. That there should some extraordinary Person come as a Deliverer, was of old believed by them ; but that our Jesus was he, was a new Article, and a very hard one to a *Jew*, who had been educated in this Persuasion, that the Messiah should appear in great Pomp and worldly Glory ; whereas they saw Jesus had not a Place wherein to lay his Head. And when they beheld him crucified, with all the Circumstances of Ignominy and Reproach, this was such a Stone of Stumbling, that his own Disciples had much ado to get over it. This made him look so very unlike his own Picture,

Picture, as it had been drawn by the *best Masters* among them, that it was almost impossible to know him ; and they must reject him, or all their old Notions at once.

And it was no easy Matter for a *Gentile* to receive him for a Saviour, who had been so scornfully treated by his own Countrymen as the vilest Malefactor, and the worst of Impostors. No wonder then that other Things are passed by, and saving Faith in him so often described by nothing else but an Assent to this single Truth, That *Jesus is the Christ*.

Sometimes the owning some Points of Faith drew down bloody Persecutions ; and to profess them, was to run the Hazard of Life, and all in this World that's dear to Men. In those early Days, he who declared his Belief that Jesus was the *Son of God*, and *raised from the Dead*, could not expect to continue long among the *Living* : And therefore saving Faith is described by an Assent to this alone, which was the trying Point ; and such a Conduct was requisite to establish the Hearts of those primitive Christians, lest the Storm should drive 'em from their Anchors, and they make shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience. Other Matters are waved, because it might reasonably be presumed, if they stood to the one, they would not be such Fools as to neglect the other, and so lose all, and gain nothing by their Religion, be miserable in both Worlds, ruin'd in this, and damn'd in the next.

At other Times, some Objects or Acts of Faith were openly opposed, or at least secretly under-

undermined by subtil Hereticks, and false Teachers, who subverted the Faith and Souls of Men. Thus when many, whether *Gnosticks* *, or whoever they were, denied the Incarnation of our Lord, then Faith in him is described by an Assent to this Truth, *That Jesus Christ was come in the Flesh* †. St. John makes the owning or not owning this a Test, whereby to know whether a Man had the Spirit of Christ or Antichrist in him. There were many such *Deceivers* and *Antichrists*, as he calls them, who denied it; and therefore, to prevent Mens being seduced by them, he saith, *Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ* ‡, (meaning this Doctrine concerning him that he was *come in the Flesh*, for of this he is speaking) *hath not God*, has no saving Interest in him; no, nor in Christ neither, as may be gather'd, not only from the Reason of the Thing, but from the very next Words of the Apostle, *viz. But he that abides in the Doctrine* (i. e. in this Doctrine) *of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son*. For, by the Rule of Contraries, he that doth not abide in it, has no special Relation to, and shall receive no saving Benefit from either one or the other. Yea, the Apostle's Indignation against them rises

* Of these Hereticks see *Hummond* and *Le Moyne's* Not. ad Barnabæ epist. miscell. sacra, Vol. 2. p. 598, &c. Bull's Exam. censura, p. 9. and Def. of Mr. H's Enquiry into the Nature of Schism, p. 99, &c. † 1 John iv. 2. ‡ Second Epistle of John, Verse 7, 9, 10, 11.

ses to so great a Height, as to command true Christians not to *receive* such Hereticks *into their Houses*, or to *bid them God speed*; for he that does so, *is a Partaker of their evil Deeds*. 'Tis very observable, that these are the Words of St. *John*, who breathes forth nothing but Love and Goodness on other Occasions, but he thunders and lightens, and is all on a Flame against these Seducers; would have sincere Christians not bestow so much as a good Wish upon them, but shut their Doors against them, as they would against a Man who hath the Plague upon him, and spreads Infection and Death wherever he comes. There was sufficient Reason for all this extraordinary Heat. These Deceivers were *many*, and they were *Antichrists*. They denied that Jesus was a real Man, and if he were a mere *Spectrum*, then he could not offer up a real Sacrifice: And so they blew up the very Foundations of that great Duty, Faith in, or Dependence on the Blood of Christ, which is absolutely necessary to the Salvation of a Sinner.

And yet that was another Point which was directly opposed too. That Notion which has made so great a Noise among us of late, *viz.* That *all that Faith that is necessary to Salvation, is a believing barely that Jesus is the Messiah, so as to be ready to give Credit to all his Revelations, and take him to be our King*, seems to me to be a Revival of that very Doctrine which the Apostle designedly writes against among the *Romans* and *Galatians*; only with this Variation, that the Necessity of ob-
serving

serving the Ceremonial Law is warily dropt. 'Tis a very common Practice for Men to dig up ancient Heresies that had been dead and buried, cut off some of the more visibly unclean Parts of them, paint the rest, and then make unthinking People believe they are new Truths. Many of the Jews professed so far to believe our Jesus to be the Messiah, as to own him for a true Prophet, and take him for their Lord and King; only they seemed to have no greater Kindness for the *Priestly* Office of Christ, than a modern Author, who exprelly tells us *, *That he doth not any where assume to himself the Title of a Priest, or mention any Thing relating to his Priesthood.* Though, by the way, he owned himself to be the *Messiah*; which, till this new Light came into the World, was wont to be understood so as to comprehend the Office of a *Priest*, as well as that of a Prophet and King. And he also owned, that the *Cx Psalm* belonged to the Messiah, (that is, to himself) applying to that Purpose the first Verse of it, *The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right Hand, &c.* † Now, of the self same Person are those Words undeniably spoken in the 4 Verse of the same *Psalm*, *Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedech.* And our Saviour often spake of *laying down his Life for his Sheep* ‡, and giving it as a *Ransom for many* *. And, said he, *This*
is

* Reasonab. of Christian. p. 214. † Matth. xxii. 44.

‡ John x. 15. * Matth. xx. 28.

is my Blood of the New Testament, shed for many for the Remission of Sins *. And told his Disciples, that after his Ascension, he would pray for them †; and this I think is saying something relating to his Priesthood, of which, offering Sacrifice, and making Intercession, are the two Branches. He that said these Things of himself, did, at least *implicitly*, assume to himself the Title of a Priest, and that, according to this Author, is as much as he did with Reference to that other of the *Messiah*. 'Tis the Humour of the Times to run down the Priesthood, both Name and Thing; but sure Men carry the Point a little too far, when they fly at it wherever it is, and will not spare it, no, not in our blessed Saviour himself, but rend away from him his sacerdotal Work and Office; or at least represent it so very empty and insignificant a Trifle, that a Man may be a very good Christian, and be saved by him, though he believe not one Word or Syllable of it.

This, as I was saying, was for the main, that grand Error which the Apostle endeavours with all his Might to beat down, in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, many of whom had no Thoughts of being saved by Faith in the Righteousness and Blood of Christ, but by their own Works of Obedience. And therefore St. Paul describes Faith by *not establishing our*

own

* *Matth.* xxvi. 28. † *John* xiv. 16. and xvi. 26.

own Righteousness, but submitting to the Righteousness of God *, speaks often of Faith in his Blood † as a Propitiation, of receiving the Atonement, and Abundance of Grace, and the Gift of Righteousness ‡ ; and says, that by the Obedience of Christ many shall be made righteous * ; and these Men, whom he argues against, did frustrate the Grace of God †, break in Pieces the Cross of Christ, and make his Death to be altogether in vain ; with many other Passages of the same Nature. Other Matters he overlooks, and speaks only to this, because this was the only Part of Faith in Christ that was then in Dispute between him and his erroneous Adversaries.

Again, at other Times, another Act of Faith, and the whole Nature of it, was practically neglected, or misunderstood. Some wrested sundry Passages of St. Paul's Epistles so far, as to assert, that a barren dead Assent, or a bold presumptuous Trust, was Faith, and all that was necessary to Salvation. And then, either to prevent, or cure this grand Mistake, we are told of Faith under the Notion of receiving Christ Jesus as the Lord ‡, and that it is but a Counterfeit if it don't purify the Soul, and work by Love, if it be not attended with good Works, and accompanied with a thorough Change in the Temper of the Heart, and Tenor of the Life. Little or no Notice is taken of other Things, but
this

* Rom. x. 3. † Rom. iii. 25. ‡ Rom. v. 11, 17.

* Ver. 19. † Gal. ii. 21. ‡ Col. ii. 6.

this is insisted on, that so the sacred Writers might (as in all Reason they ought) more effectually strike at the damning Errors of those Times. Like wise Commanders, who seem comparatively to neglect the other Parts of a Fort, and draw down all their Strength to defend that Post, which, being vigorously attacked, is in great Danger of being taken by the Enemy.

Thus the holy Penmen of the Scriptures single out and fasten upon that very Point that was wholly new, and looked like an incredible one, that which was opposed by bloody Persecutors, or subtil Hereticks, or mistaken by wretchedly deluded and licentious Men. They press and establish that which was the special Truth and Duty of their Day, and therefore we have one Account of Faith in one Place, and another Account of it in another Place, according to the different Circumstances of the Times wherein they spoke or wrote, or the Persons they had to deal with, against whom they levelled their Discourses. They don't, in all Places, mention other Objects or Acts, nor sometimes the necessary Fruits of Faith, which shew it to be of the right Kind, though, in themselves, altogether as weighty (which yet, at other Times, they do take Notice of) because then there was no present Necessity of insisting upon them, they were foreign to the Argument in hand, were not the Question in Controversy, which they confine themselves unto. And herein the Scripture was wisely composed, and the Penmen of it did as good Authors would and should do, who
mind

mind the Profit and Salvation of those to whom they write or preach.

2. And the Prudence of their Conduct will further appear, by their having a Regard as to the external State of Affairs, so to the inward Frame of Mens Spirits, and thereupon we have yet other Descriptions of Faith. Sometimes a convinced Sinner is as much pained, as the poor *Israelites* when bitten by the flying Serpents, which shot such a Fire into their Veins, as made the whole Mass of their Blood to boil, and miserably scald them. And then Faith is described by *Looking to Jesus*, in Allusion to those *Israelites* * fixing their Eyes on the brazen Serpent to draw out the Venom, restore Ease, and preserve Life. And yet, as though the Men were in Love with the Misery which they cannot bear, sometimes awakened Sinners hang off from the Grace that is offered. *What, can there be Mercy for me? Pardon for so vile a Wretch as I am?* And then Faith is set forth under the Term of *Coming to Christ* †, as a Man who is weary and heavy laden would to one who calls him with the kind Design of taking the heavy Load off his Shoulders. But tho' some are slow and backward, others are in Haste. There is (say they within themselves) but a Hair's Breadth between us and Hell. If divine Vengeance should suddenly seize us, we are undone for ever. Then Faith is described by *Fleeing to Jesus* ‡ as our City of Refuge. But
though

* *John* iii. 14. † *Matth.* xi. 28. ‡ *Hebr.* vi. 18.

though Fear add Wings to the Soul, yet Despair binds them up that they cannot stir, and with this awakened Sinners are sometimes almost swallowed up. They stand still, and are ready to drop down. Then Faith is described by *Resting, Leaning, and Relying upon Christ*, and laying Hold of him. And whatever some Men may imagine, the People are not so stupid but they understand these Terms (which is more than these profane Scoffers do) and the *Words* are agreeable to a wounded Conscience, as well as the *Things* that are signified by them, *For the Ear trieth Words as the Mouth tasteth Meat* *; the *Relish* and *Savour* whereof is grateful to the Palate, as well as the *Substance* is nourishing to the Body. Should I tell a Friend of mine, I *commit* such an Affair to him, add *leave* it with him, and *rest*, or *depend*, or *rely* upon his Interest, Prudence and Integrity, that he will not suffer me to be *run down* †; though he were a *plain* Man, he would easily understand me without any more ado, and think me not a little impertinent, if I should take a great deal of Pains to *strip* these Metaphors, under a Pretence of speaking more intelligibly to him. This is very familiar Language, and very emphatical too. And so is *Closing with* one who makes me a very advantageous Proposal, and *embracing* him and his kind Offer, by which Terms some Divines of great Note and Learning have been wont to express the

* Job xxxiv. 3. † Dr. Wallis Serm. p. 38.

the *consenting* Act of Faith. And they are the *silly Men* (and not the common People) who fancy ordinary Christians don't know the Meaning of those Expressions when applied to divine Matters, which every one takes for granted they do understand, when they are used in human Affairs, without any Scruple.

Thus the Apostles give us various Accounts of Faith, because of the Respect they had to the different State of Affairs in their Day; they consulted the Difficulties which attended some Acts or Objects of Faith, and the Perplexities of Mens Consciences. But because there is nothing new under the Sun, the same external Difficulties, from Persecutions, Heresies, and practical Errors, and the same internal Troubles are to be met with in our Age as in theirs; the Scriptures therefore are wisely penned, and of admirable Use to us, as well as to the first Christians, to whom they were immediately directed. The Waters of a living Spring will be no less refreshing to Posterity, because their Fore-fathers have drunk of them several Ages ere they were born.

SECTION II.

Another Reason why we have such different Accounts of Faith, is, because the sacred Penmen do suppose that we understand that one Act of Faith does naturally imply another, or infer it, and produce its proper Effects.

1. Some Acts of Faith naturally imply others as necessarily previous to them. For Instance,
some-

sometimes Faith in Christ is described by *con-
senting* to him, and *relying* upon him. Now
we cannot be so weak, but we must understand,
and there is little Need, at every Turn, to tell
us, that both of these do presuppose the assen-
ting Act of Faith. It cannot be thought any
Man should accept him for his Prophet, Priest,
or King, who is not convinced that he was sent
from God to reveal his Will, pacify his Wrath,
and rule in his Name; nor put his Trust in
him for Life and Salvation, unless he be per-
swaded that he hath put away Sin, and opened
the Kingdom of Heaven by the Sacrifice of
himself. He who expects to be obeyed as an
Officer, must produce a Commission well at-
tested; and it is too great a Venture to build for
Eternity, if I am not well satisfied of the Firm-
ness of the Ground and Foundation.

2. In other Cases, one Act of Faith doth na-
turally tend to infer another, and produce its
proper Effects. There is such a natural Chain and
Dependence of one Thing upon another, that, un-
less I act very unreasonably, and be either
very thoughtless, or wretchedly false to my own
Interest and Principles, I shall be led on from
one Point of Faith to another, and from Belief
to a suitable Practice. For Instance, suppose I
do *assent* to this as a certain Truth, that Jesus
was *raised from the Dead*; hence, of Course,
it follows, that he was indeed a Teacher sent
forth from God. A mere Man cannot raise
himself. Death is an Evil that no human Skill
can prevent, much less can it cure. None can
raise his Friend, much less himself, out of the
Grave.

Faith in Jesus Christ. 49

Grave. The Devil could not, and we may be sure he never would have raised *Jesus of Nazareth*. He understands his Interest better than to appear in the Behalf of one whose Business it was to overturn the very Foundations of his Kingdom, who had cast him out of many Bodies while he lived, and would cast him out of more Souls, if he should revive. God would never have raised him had he been an Impostor, wrought a Miracle to countenance a Cheat, and laid an invincible Temptation before honest Men to believe a Liar, who had appealed to this as the Sign * of his divine Mission. The *Jews* set a Watch, placed a Stone, put a Seal on his Grave to make all sure. Providence would have set such a Watch as should never have slept, such a Stone as should never have been rolled away, such a Seal as should never have been broke open, at least not till the third Day had been over, if Christ had been a Deceiver. Hence it unavoidably follows, that he was what he professed, one who came from the Bosom of the Father to reveal his Will. And the natural Result of that is, that, by virtue of my Allegiance to God, I am bound to hearken to him as the great Prophet, and give Credit to every Thing he says. Now the Consequence of that is, I am bound to receive him as my Priest, and rely on him as such. For one of the main Things he teaches, and which a guilty Creature had Need to learn, is, how a

C Sinner

* *Matth.* xii. 39, 40.

Sinner may be reconciled to God. And it is the great Scope of many of his Revelations, to assure Men that there is no other Sacrifice, no other Expiation, no other Atonement but his Blood, in the Virtue whereof a fallen Wretch can, with Comfort, with Confidence and Safety, appear before an holy and righteous God ; nor can any of our Services be of a sweet-smelling Savour, unless perfumed with his Incense. So that if I take Christ for my Prophet, I am obliged to receive him as my Priest too, whereupon I am under a Necessity of consenting to him as my King also. For this is clearly laid down by himself and his Apostles, that I must receive him in both these Offices, or I can have him in neither ; in this Sense *Christ is not divided*. Whence it follows, I must obey him, for I am under the strongest Motives to it, that can be propounded to a reasonable Creature, he having assured me, that everlasting Death shall be the Portion of Rebels, and a massy Crown of eternal Life shall be the Reward of all his faithful Subjects. And if so vast a Weight, as both these together, will not set all the Springs of Action in Motion, nothing else is capable of making them stir. Thus it is plain, that an Assent to this one Truth (of which we have greater Evidence than of any Matter of Fact besides) that *Christ is risen*, if I attend to it, if I dwell upon it, and be true to my own Light and Perswasion, following on whither it would naturally lead me, it will bring me on to all the other Acts of Faith, and influence me to all Manner of holy Obedience.

SECTION III.

III. The Language of Scripture, in its several Accounts of Faith, is agreeable to the known usual Way of speaking among Men, what is very familiar with Lawgivers, and indeed, in our common Discourse. God does not speak to us as a Philosopher to his Pupils, as a trifling Grammarian, or an over exact Critick, who are bound up to Niceties, but as a Governor to his Subjects. There is a Stiffness and Preciseness in Words, as well as in Behaviour, that is very ungrateful. There is a becoming Negligence of Style, as well as Dress, that is natural and sweet, looks great in a King, and has, like himself, a Kind of Majesty in it. Rulers, in their publick Edicts, are not wont to use Words in a strict, narrow, physical Sense; but in a large moral one, signifying, by one Term, a Compound of many physical Acts, taking it for granted, that their Inferiors have so much Sense as so to understand them. Suppose a Prince should say to a desperate Knot of Rebels, *Receive* me for your King, and I will pardon you, they would presently know what he meant thereby, *viz.* that they should own him as their rightful Sovereign, shake off the Usurper's Yoke, testify their Sorrow for their former Rebellions, lay Hold on his Act of Grace, and engage to demean themselves as obedient loyal Subjects for the future. Now, why should not Men as well understand all this is contained in their *receiving Christ*

Jesus the Lord, when Faith in him is so described in their Bibles?

And this Way of speaking, as it is usual with Lawgivers, so it is in our ordinary Discourse. If I should come to a Man that is desperately sick, and say, *There is such a Physician, do but trust him, and he will certainly cure you*, he would presently take me, that I meant, besides the physical Act of Trusting, that he should entertain a good Opinion of his Person as to his Skill and Honesty, put himself into his Hands, take his Counsel and his Physick, and follow his Prescriptions. If he were so void of common Sense, as not to understand my Words in this Latitude, I should conclude that his Disease lay mightily in his Head. Now, why should not Men as well understand the Scriptures, when they are commanded to *trust in Christ*, that, besides the single Act of Reliance upon him, hereby is meant, a firm Perswasion of his Authority, Grace, and Ability to save those who apply to him, that, in a penitent, broken-hearted Manner, they must put themselves under his healing Methods, follow his Rules, and obey his Orders?

SECTION IV.

IV. We read many Hundreds of Times, in the *New Testament*, of believing. Now, if, in every one of those Places, all the Objects, and the several Acts, together with the necessary Fruits of Faith, had been mentioned, to how much a greater Bulk would this have swelled it, and that very

very needlessly, with manifest Impertinence, contrary to the Laws of Discourse and Writing, made it look like a very odd Book, and rendered it very nauseous, through its vain Repetitions, to every judicious Reader?

If to this it be replied, *That though God had not done so in every Place of the Bible where that Word is used, yet, if he had done it but in one Verse, telling us once for all, that where ever we meet with it, we must understand it in that Latitude, would not this have been better? for then we might have turned to that Place, and have easily known it, whereby we should have been delivered from a great deal of Perplexity and Labour.* I answer, in the

SECTION V.

Fifth Place. God hath wisely taken another Course, leaving much to human Industry, both with Reference to the Ministry, and also to our selves.

1. With respect to the Ministry. He hath set apart a whole Order of Men, whose Business it is to instruct others, which is a prudent and merciful Provision of his. Now, he will not put such a Slur upon an Office of his own Appointment, as to render it useless. A great Part of their Work is to *search the Scriptures*, and that for the People's sake as well as for their own, to help them to, and improve them in spiritual Knowledge, to gather up those Ears of Corn that ly scattered up and down all over the Field, to bring Things together, lay them order-

ly before their Hearers, and explain, as well as enforce them. A Minister therefore, who is void of *Scripture Knowledge*, how much Learning soever he may have of another Nature, is like a stately Building, abusively called by the Name of a Conduit, on which there are many Figures curiously carved, that please the Eye of those who walk that Way, but there being no Spring, it cannot afford one Drop of Water to refresh a thirsty Man that comes to it. *The Priests Lips should keep this Knowledge*, because *the People must seek the Law at their Mouths* *.

2. God hath no less wisely ordered it thus with Reference to the People. He hath taken such a Method as does oblige them to what is no less their Interest than their Duty, a daily serious Perusal of his sacred Oracles, whereby Men shew, at once, their Esteem for the Scriptures and their own Souls too.

'Tis not fit, that a Book of God's own writing, especially on so important a Subject as this, what a *perishing Creature must do to be saved from Hell, and brought to Heaven*, should be neglected on a Shelf, or cast into a by Corner, or thrust into a blind Hole, remaining there covered all over with Dust and Cobwebs, and be taken up once a Year, it may be, when, looking for other Things, we casually light upon it; as the Autograph of *Moses* was among the Rubbish of the Temple in the Days of *Josiah*, or
that

* *Mal. ii. 7.*

that the blessed Bible should be sleepily perused, while our Heads are swimming and nodding, and our Eyes half-shut, the Book let fall, it may be, and we ready to tumble after it. 'Tis wisely penn'd in such a Way in many other Respects, which might be named, but particularly in this; that whereas so much Stress is laid on believing in Christ, yet God has not any where laid down an exact Account of the Nature of Faith in him according to the Rules of Art, but given some Touches of it here, and some there, to induce us frequently and seriously to read it, and compare what we find in one Place with what we have in another; that so, by laying all together, we might form a true and full Notion of it. And he who will not do this, or at least who is so intolerably lazy, that he will not look into the Scripture when another has, as it were, turn'd down the Leaf in his Bible, or set a Hand in the Margin to direct him where to read in order thereunto, must fall without Pity, and die without Knowledge.

To say, Why has not God given us an exact Definition of it in some one Place, according to the nice Rules of Art? it would have saved us a great deal of Labour. You might as well say, Why did not God build us Houses to our Hands? it would have saved the Charge and Trouble of making Bricks and Mortar, hewing and squaring of Timber, and regularly putting them altogether. Or, why did he not direct us to a certain Place, where, on turning up the Surface of the Ground, we might find Pie-

ces of Silver and Gold ready coined? For it costs some Money to make more, and the Charges might have been saved, which now we are forced to be at in digging, and melting, and refining, and milling, and stamping of it. Or, to instance in Matters of a spiritual Nature, Why has not God given us an exact List of *fundamental* Articles of Faith? Or, why has he not favour'd us with a *living infallible Judge* of all Controversies, such an one in Reality as that *dumb Oracle* at Rome pretends to be? How much Study and Disputing, how many Heresies and Schisms would have been prevented, by such a kind and merciful Provision as this, had God vouchsafed it to us!

But he will not encourage Laziness. Much is left to human Diligence, as to our comfortable Subsistence in this World, and our Salvation in the next. 'Tis a just and reasonable Law, that *he who will not labour, should not eat*. And 'tis as equitable an one, that he who will not attend upon the publick Ministry, and search the Bible, yea, do both very diligently, shall not so much as know clearly and distinctly what 'tis to believe. Spiritual Food for their Souls shall not drop into the Mouths of lazy Wretches, who ly sleeping on their Backs and in their Beds; but Men must rise up and take Pains for it, that their Mouths may be fill'd by the Labour of their Hands.

C H A P. III.

Of the Necessity of Faith in Jesus Christ to Salvation.

HERE I shall not lanch out into that curious, and as to us very needless Question, about the Possibility of the Salvation of the *Heathens*. It was a sharp Saying of *Diogenes* *, *That the Grammarians in his Days, spent more Time in studying Homer, than they might know the Evils that beset Ulysses, than they did to understand or cure those which they endured themselves.* So, many among us spend more Time in disputing for and against the Salvation of Heathens, than they do in making sure of their own. We may get to Heaven, without knowing whether they are able to reach it, and when we come thither ourselves, we shall know whether any of them are there; and 'tis no great Matter if we don't know it till then.

All that I assert is this, That it is impossible for any among us, who live when and where the Gospel is publish'd, to be saved, if they do not believe on our Lord Jesus Christ. This is so plainly and so often declared in the New Testament, that there can be no rational Doubt of it. Our Saviour himself says, *He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son*

C 5

of

* Laertius lib. 6. in vita Diogenis.

of God *. *John the Baptist* also tells us, *the Wrath of God abideth on him* †. And every Minister of the Gospel has this Clause put into his Commission, (which is left open, that others may read it as well as they) tell every Creature to whom ye preach, that *he who believeth not, shall be damned* ‡. And when our Saviour would express Damnation with an Emphasis, he does it in these Words, *He shall have his Portion with Unbelievers* ||. And *St. Paul* and *Silas*, in Answer to the *Jaylor's* Question, *What shall I do to be saved?* reply, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House* **. Had they been so impertinent as to give him such Counsel, as he might have been saved, tho' he had not complied with it, I think he would have done well to have given them a Cut or two with the Sword he had newly drawn to stab himself, and added new Stripes instead of washing their old ones.

SECTION II.

II. Now, as harsh and severe as this may sound in some Mens Ears, it will appear no unreasonable Proceeding, if we do but consider the hainous Nature of Unbelief. Natural Conscience indeed startles at the Commission of scandalous Immoralities ; but many are apt to think Unbelief to be, if a Fault, yet a venial one : Whereas, if we look into the Bowels of it, we shall

* *John* iii. 18. † *John* iii. 36. ‡ *Mark* xvi. 15, 16. || *Luke* xii. 46. * * *Acts* xvi. 30, 31.

shall find it to be a very black and vile Offence.

It reflects the greatest Dishonour on God, the Father, Son, and holy Ghost ; it strikes at the Sovereignty and Authority of God. *For this is the Work of God, and his Commandment **, (i. e. it is so in a peculiar Manner) *that we believe on him whom he hath sent †.*

It reflects on the Truth of God : For, *be that believeth not the Record he hath given of his Son, makes God a Liar ‡.* Whoever doth not own him, put his Trust in, and obey him, refuses so to do, for one or both of these Reasons : Either because he does deny him to be one sent from God, or because he does not think him worthy of all Acceptation. And either Way he gives the Lie to God, who hath so abundantly testified the contrary to both of these.

It further reflects on the Goodness and Wisdom of God and Christ. *To them who believe, Christ is the Wisdom and Power of God.* To every Unbeliever he is no better than Foolishness, and under that Notion he was rejected of old, and is so at this Day.

It directly strikes at all the great Designs of the Father and Son, which the Heart of both was chiefly set upon from all Eternity ; renders the Covenant of Redemption wholly vain, and of no Effect, and the Blood of Christ like Water spilt on the Ground. Why was this noble Work of Salvation, by him contrived with so much

C 6

Wisdom,

* *John* vi. 29. † *John* iii. 23. ‡ *John* v. 10.

Wisdom, review'd with so much Delight, brought about by such bitter Agonies as our Lord endured ; if after all, so much Contempt must be poured out upon it and him, as is involved in rejecting and trampling on them by Unbelief ? What more provoking Sin can be committed against both the Father and the Son ?

Nor does the *holy Ghost* escape unreflected on. He anointed our Saviour, prepared, qualified him for, and assisted him in his Work as Mediator ; testified concerning him *by the Mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the World began* *. And when his Apostles preached him, *the holy Ghost bare them Witness with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles and Gifts* †, that so we might give Credit to his Messengers, when they recommended him to our Acceptance. He was poured out on purpose to *glorify Christ* ‡ ; and to that End, says our Saviour, *he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you*, that so you may spread my Fame all over the World. And he came to convince Men, as of other Sins, so of || Unbelief. Now, remaining in that Sin, is to thwart and oppose him in his main Errand and Design, and puts a Bar to all his farther Operations ; for he cannot sanctify, comfort, and seal Men to the Day of Redemption, while Infidelity is obstinately persisted in. And so this *holy Dove* may even take Wing, and fly back to Heaven.

* Luke i. 70. † Heb. ii. 4. ‡ John xvi. 14. || John xvi. 9.

Heaven again, there being no Work for him to do here upon Earth.

Now, how can that Man be saved, who lives and dies under the prevailing reigning Guilt of this Sin, which does in so hainous a Manner oppose the whole Trinity? If a Man sin against the Father, the Son may interceed for him; if he sin against the Son, it is not presently the unpardonable Transgression: But if he live and die thus sinning against Father, Son, and holy Ghost too, who shall plead for him, or stand his Friend?

SECTION III.

III. Nor is this to be evaded by pretending, that in the Days of our Saviour and his Apostles, Men had greater Light and Evidence of the Truth of the Gospel, and the Mission of Christ, than we have, because they *saw* the Miracles wrought by him and them; and therefore their Unbelief was very hainous, and deserved Damnation: Whereas we have only the Report of them, and therefore the Unbelief of Men in our Days is less culpable, and shall not be so severely punish'd.

For *John* the Baptist, who wrought no Miracle, preached this severe Doctrine (as some may think it) That *the Wrath of God abides on him who believes not the Son of God**; for these are his Words, and spoken by him too, before.

* *John* iii. 36.

before Christ had made himself famous by his Miracles.

Besides, we have uncontrollable Evidence and Testimony that such Miracles were wrought, tho' we did not see them with our own Eyes. And we, from our Childhood, have been trained up in an honourable Esteem of Christ and his Gospel; whereas their Minds were tinctur'd with wrong Notions, and poison'd against him with early Prejudices. Now, every one knows, our Souls are not like a *Table-book*, out of which any Thing that is written in it may be wiped easily, and with a wet Finger; but like Marble or Brass, 'tis hard to cut out the Letters that are once engraven on it, and substitute others in their Room.

And we have some very considerable Advantages and Motives to give Credit to the Gospel, which they had not, and which, if laid in the Balance, will be at least equivalent to their seeing the *Wonders* that were wrought in Confirmation of it. Such are, the strange spreading of the Gospel, and the fulfilling the Prophecies of our Saviour against the *Jews*, of which I have treated elsewhere *. Whereunto might be added the dreadful Apostacy in the Christian Church, foretold by St. *Paul* †, which may serve greatly to prevent ours, and their falling from the Christian Faith establish us in it, if the Reader will but peruse the admirable Discourse

* *Preface to Preservative against Deism*, p. 18, 19, &c. † *1 Tim.* iv. 1, 2, 3.

course of our incomparable *Joseph Mede* upon it, who so excellently explains that Scripture, as if the same extraordinary Spirit who dictated the Text, had done the like by the Comment upon it,

I'll mention one more, and that I'll take from the *Revelations*, tho' a Book which profane Men are apt to ridicule, and bold Expositors of it have given but too much Occasion for it, who have seen more *Visions* than ever St. *John* did; only his were from above, and I need not say whence theirs came. I don't pretend to a deep Insight into it, nor will any considering Man, till it be *Day*, and more Light comes, hope to penetrate into the Heart of that Country, when many have been so miserably shipwreck'd upon the Coast of it. I shall not speak at all to any of the Places where Antichrist is foretold, and described by such Marks, that as the Lord *Bacon* wittily said, if a Hue and Cry were sent out against him, and the Pope seized, and brought before him, he would stop him till he had well cleared himself of them. I shall only take Notice of one Passage, wherein 'tis said, *God hath put it into the Heart of the Kings of the Earth to fulfil his Will, and to agree, and give their Kingdom to the Beast, until the Words of God shall be fulfilled* *. Who, so long before the Matter of Fact fell out, as this Book was written, could ever have imagin'd, that Princes, who are so very jealous of
their

* *Rev.* xvii. 17.

their Power and Prerogative, should suffer themselves to be so rid by the Beast, and trampled upon by the Pope? It was the best Thing that ever dropt from the Pen of the * vilest of Men, when he compared him to *Oberon the King of Fairy-land*. There's not the least Shadow, either of Reason or Scripture, for his lordly Supremacy over them; and yet how tamely do they all, even the wisest among them, submit their Necks to his Yoke? and do that in a metaphorical Sense, which that mean-spirited Emperor did in a literal one, *hold the Stirrup, while he gets up into the Saddle*? One would be astonish'd that such deep Politicians, as many of them are, should believe a Bit of Bread to be human Flesh, it being made so by a silly Priest's mumbling five Words over it, and then pay divine Worship to it as if it were a Deity, and eat it up when they have done, (no Wonder they eat up their People, when they do so by their God) and in Defiance to their very Senses, take Wine for the Blood of a Man: If indeed it were transubstantiated into that, they did well enough, who, as an Act of peculiar Grace, granted the Cup to some Kings, when they denied it to the common People; for human Blood is the sweetest Draught a Tyrant can take. And how unaccountable is it, that they should so very bitterly persecute their poor Subjects with all Manner of Cruelty, who can't believe and practise the same? Yea, that they should

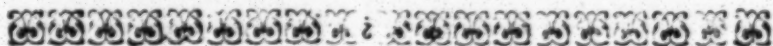
* *Hob's Leviathan*.

should do this contrary to repeated Promises, and perpetual Edicts, confirm'd by themselves as well as their Ancestors; and notwithstanding they have publickly own'd they ow their Crown's sitting fast on their own Head to their Fidelity and Valour: And that they should do so, to the weakning and apparent impoverishing of their Kingdoms, the promoting of whose Welfare and Trade they seem to be very zealously bent upon? Good God! that ever so many wise Princes and States should be so very tenaciously fond of, so exceeding fiery for a Religion, in which the most infamous Idolatries, and the most barbarous Cruelties do vie with each other! But it was foretold by the *Spirit of Prophecy, which is the Testimony of Jesus **, and so it has come to pass, which is a standing Evidence of the Truth of the Scriptures. So that Christ is serv'd this Way by his greatest Enemy; and the *Man of Sin*, who has so notoriously subverted the Gospel, helps to confirm it, and establishes Christ's Throne by his very Act of pulling it down, as Rebels are wont to do that of their rightful Prince by their Attempts against him. This obscure Book of the Canon is like the new Moon, the greatest Part of it is dark; but yet this single Passage (which is not the only one neither) is so light, that one may easily see 'tis of a divine Original, as one may that the Moon is an heavenly Body.

In

* Rev. xix. 10.

In short, we have Evidence bright enough of the Truth of the Gospel to render an Unbeliever inexcusable, and his Damnation just. I think it would have been a sorry Plea for a *dispensing Judge*, that *Magna Charta*, which he destroyed with his unhallowed Breath, was an old Manuscript, and the whole relating to it was transacted so many Ages ago ; that truly, for ought the silly Tool knew, it might be a mere Forgery, and an idle Tale. The Reader may easily apply this to the Matter in Hand.



C H A P. IV.

Objections answer'd. The Case of the Kenites consider'd.

There's no Point so plain, but a witty Man may have something to say against it. Our modern Infidels fight against our blessed Saviour with his own Sword, and turn the Scriptures themselves, as they manage them, into an Engine to batter down the Necessity of Faith in him, and openly contend, that *mere Morality*, or *bare Charity* to the Poor, is sufficient to any Man's Salvation. Several Texts they bring (and we know their Father could quote Scripture long before them) to this Purpose, out of the Old Testament, and several out of the New : And by that Time the Reader sees all their Objections, he will not think I have called them out of their Name, when I term them
Infidels,

Infidels, tho', in the New Style, they affect to pass for Unitarians. For,

O B J E C T I O N I.

First. They plead, *That the Kenites, who were not of the same religious Perswasion with the Israelites **, yet, because of the Kindness of their Ancestors to those of the Israelites, were spared by Saul, for which he was not at all blamed when he slew the Amalekites †. Now, hence it is inferred, *There may be a Charity which will profit the charitable Man very much, and be very acceptable to God, where true, sound, justifying Faith (as it is called by way of Scorn) is wholly wanting.* Profitable to Salvation, the Man must mean, or else he trifles. That is the Point in Debate between him and his Adversary, and the whole Drift of his Book is to prove it, as will be most evident when we come to his own Words in the Third Objection.

Now, this Argument stands upon Two Feet, both of which are miserably weak and lame; and if either of them fail, it must tumble, but especially if both of them do so.

- I. *That these Kenites were not of the same religious Perswasion with the Israelites.*
- II. *That they were eternally saved, and that merely upon the account of their Forefathers Charity.*

S E C-

* Vindic. of Mr. T. E. p. 14, 15. † 1 Sam. xv.

SECTION I.

I. *That these Kenites were not of the same religious Perswasion with the Israelites.* This is asserted, but not proved to be true, and very probably it is false. There are but some slight occasional Touches concerning this People in the *Old Testament*, and it is in vain to look for them elsewhere. By that little Light we have concerning them in the Scriptures, we have Reason to think they were *Husbandmen*, who addicted themselves to the keeping of Sheep, and other Cattle, and lived in Tents, frequently removing, for the Convenience of Pasture, from one Place to another. Sometimes we find them in the Land of * *Midian*, which was their native Country, at other Times among the † *Amalekites*, and, at other Times, among the ‡ *Israelites*; so that their *Sheep* were not more scattered abroad, than the Men were who look'd after them. And it is likely that some of them, at least, had the Knowledge of, and believed in the true God, and, in the *general*, in the promised *Messiah*, greater Faith than which was not ordinarily to be found, no, not in *Israel* it self in those early days.

The *Midianites*, of whom the *Kenites* were a Tribe, descended from *Abraham* by *Keturah* *. And though we should suppose that the divine Know-

* *Exod.* iii. 1. † *1 Sam.* xv. 6. ‡ *Judg.* i. 16.
Chap. iv. 11. * *Gen.* xxv. 2.

Knowledge, which he propagated to those who were descended from him, was, in Process of Time, wholly lost among many of them; yet it is plain it was not so with *Jethro*, who was the Head or Chief of that Clan or Hoard of the *Kenites*, whose Case we are now considering.

'Tis not material to our present Enquiry, whether *Reuel*, *Jethro*, and *Hobab* were, tho' three Names, yet but one Man, or two Men, or three, Grandfather, Father, and Son, about which the Learned are divided. (Though, by the Way, our Translators sometimes read it *Reuel* *, and, at another Time, *Raguel* †, in a very unaccountable Manner. It should have been either *Reuel*, or else *Raguel*, in both Places, for there is no Difference in the *Hebrew* ‡, no, not so much as in a Point.) *Jethro* the * *Kenite* was *Moses*'s Father in Law, and was a considerable Man, for he is stiled *Priest*, or *Prince of Midian* †, as the Word also signifies. For both those Offices anciently were united in one and the same Person. And, had he been an Heathen, or an idolatrous Priest, such a Man as *Moses* would never have married his Daughter. He, who for Conscience towards God, would not continue in one heathenish Family for the sake of a Kingdom, would never have run himself again into another such an one for the sake of a Wife. He who, upon the Score of Religion, refused the alluring ad-
van-

* *Exod.* ii. 18. † *Num.* x. 29. ‡ רַעֲוִאל * *Judg.* iv. 11. † *Exod.* ii. 16.

vantagious Title of being *called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter*, would much more, on the same Account, have refused to be *Jethro's Son in Law*, had *Jethro* been an idolatrous Priest. *Egypt* was one of the most renowned Kingdoms in those Days, to which *Moses* by Adoption was Heir apparent, who had an answerable Education in all their Learning *, which doth naturally raise a Man's Spirits, and kindle his Ambition. And had he come to the Throne, he might have relieved his oppressed Brethren, for whom he had so tender a Concern, as appears by his slaying the *Egyptian* who strove with the *Israelite*. I do not know indeed what great Beauty *Zipporah* might be, but I can hardly think there were Half so many Charms in her Face, as in the Crown of *Egypt*.

But suppose that *Jethro* had not had the Knowledge of the true God and the *Messiah* before, without Doubt *Moses*, when he came to be a Member of his Family, would have instructed him in these weighty Points. For *Moses* lived by Faith in God and the *Messiah*, and was now suffering for it, refusing to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter, choosing rather to endure Affliction with the People of God, than enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season; esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than all the Treasures of Egypt; for he had Respect to the Recompence of the Reward †. And could he have his Eye so fixed on Heaven, and never open

* Acts vii. 22. † Hebr. xi. 25, 26, 27.

open his Mouth about it, or the Way that leads to it? Could he so value the *Reproach* of Christ, and *suffer* so much for him, and yet never speak of him to his near Relations, and others, with whom he familiarly conversed? Or can it be thought, that *Moses*, who so carefully looked after *Jethro's* Sheep, should have no Regard to his Soul? 'Tis observable, that, upon *Jethro's* meeting with *Moses* and *Aaron*, and the Elders of *Israel*, they all joyned together in Sacrifice to the true God, nay, *Jethro* seems to officiate as the Priest, and the others to joyn with him as the principal Agent; for it was *he* * *that took the Burnt-offering and Sacrifices for God; and Aaron came, and the Elders of Israel, to eat Bread with him before God*, i. e. to feast with him upon the Remains of his Sacrifice, which, had he been an *Heathen Idolater*, they would never have done. For, as the Apostle saith, *they who eat of the Sacrifice, partake of the Altar* †, i. e. by so doing they profess their owning of, and Communion in that Way of Worship. Add hereunto, ‡ that tho' *Pharaoh* was expressly required to let the *Israelites* go into the Wilderness to sacrifice there, yet *Jethro* was beforehand with them, at least, his is the first Sacrifice there of which we have any Account left upon Record.

'Tis true indeed the *Midianites* joyned with the *Moabites* in sending for *Balaam* to curse the
Isra-

* Ecod. xviii. 11. † 1 Cor. x. 18. ‡ *Moncai hist. apparit. in Crenii Fascic. p. 300.*

Israelites. But then the *Midianites* were not united in one Monarchy, but were governed by several petty * Princes, or Lords; and this Addition of theirs was very near Forty Years after this Interview between *Moses* and *Jethro*; for it was immediately before the Death of *Moses* †, which we know was just as the *Israelites* were on the Point of entering into *Canaan*; and, in all Probability, *Jethro* had been dead for some Time, for he was an old Man when he met *Moses* and *Israel* at their first Coming out of *Egypt*. As long as the good Man was alive, we read of no Attempt by the Princes of *Midian* upon the *Israelites*; but *Jethro*, one of them, instead of that, congratulates their Arrival in their Neighbourhood, though one would have thought, Policy and Reason of State should have made them very uneasy, when so vast a Company of needy and powerful Strangers were for so many Months hovering about their Borders.

The *Rechabites* also, of whom so honourable Mention is made by ‡ God himself, were a Branch of this People; and several of the *Kenites* were * Scribes in *Israel*. Whether we understand it of civil Scribes, like our publick Notaries, or of ecclesiastical ones, Persons engaged in transcribing or expounding the Law, they would have been suffered in neither of these Employments,

* See *Num.* xxii. 4. & xxv. 15. & xxxi. 8. *Jesh.* xiii. 21. † See *Num.* xxxi. 2. ‡ *Ier.* xxxv. * *1 Chr.* ii. 55.

ments, had they not been Profelytes to the Faith of *Israel*, but mere Heathens and Idolaters. So that it doth not appear that these Men were not of the same religious Perswasion with the *Israelites*, but, on the contrary, it is, at least, the more probable of the Two, that they were found orthodox Believers, according to that Measure of Revelation which the Church of God was then blessed withal.

But there is another lame Foot on which this Objection stands.

SECTION II.

II. That these *Kenites* were eternally saved, and that too upon the Account of mere Charity, without any Thing of Faith. They were preserved from the Edge of the Sword, but we are no where told they were delivered from the Flames of Hell. Their Lives were given to them *as a Prey*, but we don't read, that Heaven too was given them as their Inheritance. 'Tis a wild Inference to conclude the one from the other. We might as well renew the old fortifish Fables of the Heathens, and place *Brutes* among the Stars, for their Beasts were preserved as well as their Owners.

The hard Service of *Nebuchadnezzar* in the Siege of *Tyre* * (though he aimed not at God in it, but minded only the gratifying of his own Ambition, and enlarging the Bounds of his Empire)

D

pire)

* *Ezek.* xxix. 18, 19.

pire) did profit him in some Measure, and was so far acceptable to God, that he gives him the Spoils of *Egypt* for his Reward. But will any Man thence infer, that he had the Kingdom of Heaven given him too ? no Man sure, unless he can produce very good Evidences of his deep Repentance, will place that haughty Monarch in the Seat of the Blessed, who was more of a *Brute* in human Shape, when he rolled in Blood, and devoured Men, than when his Body was wet with the Dew of Heaven, and he did eat Grass like an Ox, conversing among his *Brethren of the Field*, whose Hoofs and Horns were nothing near so mischievous as his cruel Hands had been.

If these *Kenites* were eternally saved on the Account of mere Charity, without any Thing of Faith, it was not for their *own* Charity, but that of their Forefathers, some Ages before, towards the *Israelites*. Now, that Man carries the Point beyond any tolerable Bounds, who supposeth such a Force in the Kindness of a great Grandfather, as to make the Gates of Heaven fly open of the Admission of all his unbelieving Posterity, into the Mansions of everlasting Glory.

Thus you see both the Pillars are rotten on which this Objection must be built, and consequently it must fall on the Head of him who hath so inconsiderately advanced it.

C H A P. V.

A Second Objection answered. The Case of Job considered, and the ancient Faith of the Israelites.

IT is further pleaded, *That Job, and his Three Friends, were not of the Faith of the Church of Israel *. And dare any Man affirm that such Men as they were damned, eternally damned? I trow not.*

To which I reply, I know no Man that doth think they were, or hath any Reason for it. But Two Considerations will remove this Stone of stumbling out of our Way.

I. *There is no Strength in this Argument.*

II. *There is as little of Truth in it.*

S E C T I O N I.

I. *There is no Strength in this Argument.* It might very easily and very fairly be evaded in this Manner. Either the same Points of Faith were propounded to *Job* and his Three Friends, that had been propounded to the *Israelites*, or they were not. If they were, no doubt but so good as they, *Job* especially, would have assented to them. If they were not proposed to

D 2

them,

* Vindic. of Mr. T. E. p. 15.

them, it was no Fault in them not to assent to and embrace them; and consequently this Instance is very impertinently alledged. For the Question which we are debating, is the Impossibility of the Salvation of those who *have the Gospel revealed to them, and yet disbelieve it.* The Case is vastly different between those who do not believe in Christ, because they never heard of him (for that is simply and naturally impossible) and those who have heard of him, and yet do not believe in him, who are guilty of a wilful and a very vile Sin; and it is as plain from the Scripture as Words can make it, that this is a *damning* Sin too. But,

SECTION II.

II. There is as little of Truth as there is of Strength in this Argument, if our Author's Word may be taken; for he will have Job to be * the Fifth from Abraham by the Line of Esau, because the *Septuagint* say so, though † learned Men think their Authority in this Matter not very great. Now *all the ‡ Faith* that he will allow the ancient Patriarchs to have had, both before and after Abraham's Days, is no more than this, *viz. that God is, and is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* And he speaks like one that is an utter Stranger to
Job's

* Vindic. of Mr. T. F. p. 15. † Vide *Usher's chronologia sacra*, p. 60, &c. Du Pin's Hist. of the Canon. p. 100. ‡ Vindic. of Mr. T. F. p. 16.

Job's Character and Piety, and that of his three Friends, who makes a Doubt whether they had not as much Faith as this amounts unto.

So that, as this Objection is not to the Purpose, so neither is it true, according to our Author's own dear Self, that they were not of the Faith of the Church of *Israel*.

And here I might set my Foot, and not take one Step further; but because I design, not so much to answer the Cavils of the Enemy, as to edify my Reader, I shall not leave this Matter so, but speak further to it under these Two Heads. I will consider,

I. *What was the ancient Faith of the Israelites.*

II. *What was the Faith of Job (and consequently of his Three Friends) and then it will appear whether they were not, for Substance, one and the same.*

SECTION III.

I. I will consider what was the ancient Faith of the Church of *Israel*. And here we are not concerned to enquire any farther, than after that Faith which they had from the Time of *Abraham*, down to *Moses*, between which Two Periods, the Learned are agreed that *Job* lived, and that I think upon very solid Arguments, of which one is his *long Life*, for he lived One hundred and forty * Years after all the Storms were

* *Job* xlii. 16.

were blown over; and, before the Days of his Calamity came upon him, he had Seven Sons and Three Daughters, which Sons of his were so far grown up, that they had Houses of their own, wherein, for a considerable Time, they had been wont, each of them in their Turn, to feast the rest of his Brethren, and their Sisters; for though his Children were *Ten* in Number, they were but *one* in Mind and Heart. This is spoken of as a common Practice, which, for some Time, had obtained among them; and so is that of their pious and jealous Father, who, when the *Days of their Feasting were gone about*, summoned them together to offer Sacrifice, for the purging them from those Follies, which he suspected, that, in the Midst of their Jollity, they might have been guilty of. For it is said, *Thus did * Job continually*. This being considered, together with the Duration of his Afflictions, which, by several of his bitter Complaints, appear to have lasted for some Time, tho' how long is uncertain, I think it will be a very modest Computation, to reckon him Sixty Years old, when the Stream that had run so strong against him began to turn.

Add this to the One hundred and forty Years he lived after, and, according to this Reckoning, he was no less than Two hundred Years old when he died, which plainly favours of the patriarchal Age; for, in *Moses's* Time, the
Mea-

* *Job* i. 5.

Measure of Man's Life was grown much shorter, reduced to the narrower Compass of Threescore Years and Ten, or Fourscore in some rare Instances; which continues as the common Standard to this Day.

And tho' we should, with a learned * Man, suppose the Xc Psalm to refer merely to the particular Case of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, who by a special Vengeance were to die in the Compass of Forty Years; yet we do not find, that any about the Time of *Moses* did come any Thing near the Years of *Job*, as *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* did. For the † First of them lived 175 Years; the Second ‡ 180. the Third * 147. But *Moses* himself lived but † 120 Years, and *Aaron* ‡ but 123. and *Joshua* * but 110. and yet is said to be waxed old and stricken in Years; *Eli* † but 98. and then too he was oppress'd with Age as well as with Grief, and is called an old Man, and fell like an helpless Child. And the prodigious Mistake of *Scaliger*, about the Age of *Phineas*, has been sufficiently ‡ exposed. The Life of Man might well begin to be reduced near after the Time of *Moses*, because the Truths of God were by his * Hand committed to Writing, and so might be more easily learnt and convey'd to others, than when there was no other Help

D 4

besides

* *Hammond* on Psalm xc. † *Gen.* xxv. 7. ‡ *Gen.* xxxv. 28. * *Gen.* xlvii. 28. † *Deut.* xxxiv. 7. ‡ *Numb.* xxxiii. 39. * *Josh.* xxiii. 1, 3. † *1 Sam.* iv. 15, 18. ‡ *Spanheim hist. Jobi*, p. 152. * *Heideggeri exerc. de longevit. Patriarch. Tom.* 1. p. 386.

besides oral Tradition, at least no Scriptures divinely inspired. And tho' there have been some very rare Instances of Men, who in latter Days have lived a very long Time, yet all who mention them speak of it as very surprizing: Whereas no more is said of *Job*, than what any would say of one who reaches to the ordinary usual Term of others in his Time, viz. that * *he died, being old and full of Days.*

Besides, he offer'd Sacrifices in his own House, as the Head and Priest of the Family.

And in all the Dialogues between him and his Friends, and in the Speeches of God himself, there's not the least Mention of the Misery of the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, or their Deliverance out of it, or the Plagues of *Pharaoh* and his Subjects, or the giving the Law in so astonishing a Manner at Mount *Sinai*: Tho' there were very fair Occasions to have spoken of some, yea, of all these; they were so pertinent to the Case in Hand, that *Job* would have urged their Example to prove what his Friends so stiffly denied, viz. That good Men were ever visited with such extraordinary Calamities as his were. Or he would have comforted himself from hence, with Hopes of Deliverance; or his Friends, or God himself, setting forth his own Majesty and Greatness, would have mention'd the Glory he had gotten in the Overthrow of that grand Enemy of his, prouder than those Waves by which he perish'd. When *Elibu* treats.

* *Job* xlii. 17.

treats of the several Methods of God's revealing himself to Men, he takes no Notice at all of the Revelation of his Will to and by *Moses*; nor is there in the whole Book any Mention of, or the least Allusion to the *Jewish* Sabbath, or to any other Parts of the *Mosaical* Institution. This Silence is altogether unaccountable on any other Supposition but this, That *Job* lived before any of these Things.

Add to this, that when *Job* would clear himself from all Suspicion of Idolatry, he professes his Detestation *only* of the most ancient Instances of it, *viz.* paying divine Worship to the Sun and Moon *, without descending to the Adoration of inferior Beings, the wretched Invention of later Ages.

Now, all these Considerations taken together, do sufficiently prove that *Job* lived before the Days of *Moses*. And therefore, our present Argument doth not oblige us to enquire further than after the Faith of the *Israelites*, between *Moses's* Time and that of *Abraham*, between which two Periods, as I said before, *Job* lived.

Now their Faith, as I take it, lay in these Articles, *viz.* That there was One only living and true God; that an extraordinary Person (afterwards called the *Messiah*) should deliver Men from the Ruines of the Fall; that there is a present Providence, and would be a future Judgment, whereupon good Men would be rewarded, and the Wicked severely punished.

D 5

As

As to the Two later of these, I suppose there will be no Dispute. As to the Two former, viz. the Belief of one God, and the Messiah, the one the first Fundamental of natural, the other of revealed Religion; it was the main End and Design of God in calling *Abraham*, and separating him and his Seed to be a peculiar People to himself, to revive a Sense of both these upon the Minds of Men. Before this, the whole World was in a Manner over-run with Polytheism and Idolatry; yea, even *Abraham* * himself was involved in the common Pollution.

And Men having lost the Sense of the one only God, no Wonder that they dropt the Notices of the one only Mediator. The Devil had cut off all Mankind at one Blow in the Sin of our first Parents, he obtain'd a second Conquest over them; he ruin'd them once by the Breach of a Command, and he did it again by their Forgetfulness of the Promise, and so drew them into another Apostacy from God; and his new Victory secured the old one. He turn'd them off from all Thoughts of the *promised Seed*, who was to bruise his Head; and so cut them off from that merciful Relief, which God, out of his abundant Compassion, had provided against that fatal Misery he had brought them into.

Shem and *Melchizedech* (unless we add honest *Abimelech*) seem to be the only Men excepted;

* *Josh.* xxiv.

cepted, at least, the only Persons of any Note left upon Record, (if indeed they were Two, or if the latter were a mere Man, about which the Learned are divided.) The one a *dying Spark*, the other a very *small Light*; for *Shem* was now in his declining Years, and *Melchizedech*, whoever he was, seems to be but a petty King; and he is represented as a Man dropt out of the Clouds, as if God had created him on Purpose, and he were none of *Adam's* Race: For he is set forth as *without Father, and without Mother*, as having no Progenitors to instruct him, and from whose Tradition divine Knowledge could be convey'd to him.

'Tis true indeed, that *Abraham* supposed there might be Fifty righteous Persons in *Sodom*; but he might in Charity hope so many Profelytes might be made by *Lot*, who sojourned a long Time among them, who also lighted his Candle at *Abraham's* Taper.

When Matters were reduced to this wretched Pass, then did God single out *Abraham* and his Posterity to be as a golden Candlestick, wherein to place a Light, that the World might not remain totally cover'd with Darkness; and that all Remembrance of the blessed Seed might not be wholly and for ever lost, he renews the Promise, That from his Loyns should that great One come, in *whom all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*.

This was the Gospel which God preached to *Abraham*, as the Apostle speaks*, and the Co-

D 6

venant

* Gal. iii. 8, 17.

tenant of Grace confirm'd in Christ. And tho' our Father indeed had not so full and so distinct a Knowledge of all the Treasure that was contained in the Bowels of this rich *Mine*, as we his Children have, yet no doubt but he had some Understanding of it. Can any Man imagine, than when *God* is the Preacher, and that upon so weighty a Point as the Gospel, the Covenant of Grace, that the *Father of Lights* should teach in so blind and dark a Manner, that nothing should be understood, especially when *Abraham* is the Scholar? If so, he would rather deserve to be called the *Father of the Blind*, than of the *Faithful*.

'Tis plain, his Thoughts were very deeply exercised about this blessed Seed: For, when he received an Order to sacrifice his Son *Isaac*, which looked like the cutting off the Ground of his own *Hopes*, as well as his Son's *Life*, and Obedience to the Command seem'd to be the Destruction of the Promise; the Apostle tells us *, he *accounted* that God was able to raise him from the Dead; he *reason'd, argu'd, debated* the Matter within himself, as the † Word signifies, that in his own Thoughts he might reconcile the seeming Contradiction. Did he do this about the *Possibility* of fulfilling the Promise, and can any one imagine he did not do the same as to the *Contents* of it? especially considering, it virtually contained in it the great Blessings of Justification, saving Grace, and eternal

* Heb. xi. 19. † λογισάμενος.

ternal Life. Doubtless he did very closely study this Point, and had some Insight into it, if our Saviour may be credited, who said to the Jews, *Abraham rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw it, and was glad* *; saw the Day of his Coming into the World as the *Messiah*; for our Saviour brings him in as so doing, by way of Reproach to them who valued themselves so much upon their Descent from *Abraham*, and yet did reject the true *Messiah*, now that he did appear. The Expression is doubled, 'tis not an idle Tautology, but to shew how deeply *Abraham* was affected with, and how heartily he embraced it, tho' it was at so great a Distance from him. *He rejoiced to see my Day*; and, as tho' that had not been enough, it is added, *He saw it, and was glad*.

It is an odd Way of seeing, to behold *nothing* at all of the Matter; he must have some Knowledge of it, or else the Joy of *Abraham* was the Joy of a Fool, who rejoices in he knows not what.

It is not improbable, that God might give him some further Instructions than what *Moses* hath left upon Record, who studies *Brevity* in his History.

And whatever Knowledge he gained in this most weighty Point, to be sure he would carefully transmit and impart to his Children, considering the Testimony God himself gives of him, *I know Abraham that he will command*

* *Joh. viii. 56.*

*mand his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him *.*

When God had renewed the great Promise of the Seed to Isaac, he built an Altar and worshipp'd him as the God of his Father *Abraham* †. The same Promise of the Seed, in whom all the Nations of the Earth were to be blessed ‡, was repeated to *Jacob*, whereupon he solemnly renews his Covenant with God. And *Esau* is stiled a *profane* || Person, for selling his Birth-right, because this was a virtual renouncing the Messiah, and the Covenant of Grace in him.

When *Jacob* lay a dying, having liken'd his Son *Dan* to a *Serpent by the Way, and an Adder in the Path **, &c. he immediately breathes out this pious Ejaculation, *-I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.* The holy Man (as † one well observes) having mention'd the Serpent, he presently reflected on the Mischief done to our first Parents, and in them to all their Posterity, by the old Serpent in Paradise; and thereupon breaks forth into an high Expression of his Faith, in that Salvation from it, which God had promised by the Seed of the Woman that was to break his Head. A
very

* Gen. xviii. 19. † Gen. xxvi. 24, 25. ‡ Gen. xxviii. 14, 20, 21, 22. || Heb. xii. 16. * Gen. xlix. 17, 18. † Charnock's second Vol. p. 1169.

very proper Thought for an expiring Saint, who was now under the Stroke of that Death which that old Enemy had brought in like a Flood upon the World. No other tolerable Account can be given for such an unusual Start from the Work in Hand, the solemn Blessing of his Children. If this were not the secret Spring of such a sudden and seemingly irregular Motion, why did he not utter somewhat like this before, when he had a very proper Occasion for it, he being then speaking of *Shilo's* coming of the Tribe of *Judah*, and *the gathering of the People to him* *, which is another Evidence and Instance of his Remembrance of the Messiah?

As for his Son *Joseph*, when the rest of the *Egyptians* sold their Lands, he spared those that belonged to the *Priests*. From him it is most probable that they learned Circumcision, which is an † Opinion that hath much better Grounds than what some Authors have advanced. If so, I believe the Reader will be of my Mind, that together with the *Sign*, he propagated among them some Knowledge of the Covenant. And what if I should guess, that that was one Reason why he spared their *Glebe Lands*, that thereby he might oblige them to diffuse it among their Countrymen? Tho' these Men only kept the *Box*, and quickly dropt the *Jewel*, preserv'd the Rite, but lost the Thing signify'd thereby. *Joseph* knew well enough
what

* Gen. xlix. 10. † Vid. Witsii *Ægypt. Tanner's* *Primordia*, p. 113.

what an Advantage it was to Religion, to engage a learned Body of Men to promote it. And considering his Wisdom and Authority, and marrying into the Family of *Potipherah, the Priest of On* *, he must needs have a great Influence upon their whole Order. Now I can't imagine, but his great Piety would naturally prompt him to improve it for the Interest of Religion. Was he so very diligent to lay up and give forth *Corn* for the Preservation of their Bodies? and can we think such a Man as he would not endeavour to scatter some good *Seed* among them, and take some Care to provide Food for their Souls? He was appointed to *teach the Egyptian Senators Wisdom* †, and if they had been refractory, *the King gave him Authority to bind his Princes at his Pleasure*. Now, can we think he would not teach them the highest Wisdom, and use such ample Powers to oblige them to learn it? If he had no Regard to the eternal Welfare of the *Egyptians*, sure he had some Care of the temporal Happiness of his Brethren. *Joseph* did not want for Politicks, and any Man with Half an Eye might foresee, that numerous Profelytes among the Courtiers and learned Men would be the *Israelites* Strength and Defence when he was dead and gone; whereas otherwise, so great a Difference as there was between them in Religion, which made them mutually an Abomination to each other, must expose them after
his

* Gen. xli. 45. † Psal. cv. 22.

his Decease to the Rage of the worst of *Butchers*, idolatrous *Priests*, who, *virtute officii*, did cut Throats and shed Blood: For the offering up of *unbloody Sacrifices* is the ridiculous Invention of much later Times.

After *Joseph's* Decease the *Israelites* suffered a cruel Oppression, and under such Circumstances we must reasonably expect to hear rather of their Sighs and Groans, their Taskmasters and their Bricks, than of their Articles of Faith. And tho' God indeed remembred his Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, 'tis no Wonder that they had almost forgotten it: But yet Religion was not so worn out among them, but that *Moses* was train'd up in the Doctrine of Christ, as well as in all the Wisdom of the Egyptians. How else came he to have that Measure of Faith in him, and Love to him, as to set such a Value on his Reproach *?

After he had brought his Brethren out of the Land of Bondage, he received the Law at Mount Sinai, which, as the Apostle † admirably shews, was given as an Appendix, and in a Subserviency to the Covenant of God in Christ, and the several Parts of it appear to have been contrived and framed with that Design. The *Moral Law*, by the Strictness of its Precepts, and the Severity of its Curse to drive Men to Christ, the *Ceremonial Law* to point him out unto them, and the *Judicial Law*, to preserve them as a distinct Body till the *Messiah* was come.

So

* *Heb.* xi. 26. † *Gal.* iii. from Verse 17. to 25.

So much for the ancient Faith of the Church of *Israel*.

Let us now consider,

SECTION IV.

II. The Faith of *Job*. The Generality of the Learned are agreed, that he was of the House, or however of the Kindred of *Abraham*, and a Child of *Abraham's* he was in the spiritual at least, if not in the natural Sense. He professeth his Faith in the one living and true God, with his Abhorrence of the most ancient Kinds of Idolatry, that were most prevalent in those early Days, and in those Parts where he lived. *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in Brightness, and my Heart hath been secretly enticed, or my Mouth hath kissed my Hand; this also were an Iniquity to be punished by the Judge, for I should have denied the God that is above **.

We cannot but think, that such a Man as he did understand somewhat of those Sacrifices, which he so diligently offer'd for his Children, and afterwards for his Friends by way of Atonement for them.

We have a solemn Profession of his Faith in the *Messiah*, as his Judge and Saviour. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day on the Earth: And though after my Skin Worms destroy this Body,*
yet

* *Job xxxi. 26, 27, 28.*

yet in my Flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another, though my Reins be consumed within me *. I know indeed that some learned Men have endeavoured to expound this away, and would have it understood of a *metaphorical* Resurrection, viz. that he was confident he should be restored to his former flourishing State here on Earth.

Ah poor Job! I perceive all his *untoward Friends* did not live in his own Days, but some of them in ours, who, if the Saints above did know how Matters go here below, would put him to a fresh Exercise of his Patience. One would have thought the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, his Diseases, the Wind, and the Devil, had made him miserable enough; but these Critics would, if it were in their Power, deal worse by him than all of them together. They deprived him of his Health, his Children, and his Estate, but these Men would fain plunder him of this glorious Profession of his Faith.

This is to put such a Sense on these Words, as is directly contrary to the whole Strain of Job's Speeches, who had no Thoughts of a Restoration to a temporal Happiness, a total Despair of that, like a *black Line*, runs through the Whole of his Discourses, yea, even in this very Chapter, *He hath destroyed me*, saith he, *on every Side, and I am gone; and my Hope hath be removed like a Tree †*, which, when once
torn

* Job xix. 25, 26, 27. † Ver. 10.

torn up by the Roots, never grows again. How absurd would it be to make this holy Man blow *hot and cold* in a Breath? He passionately longs for Death, as his only * Remedy, and rejoices in the Thoughts of its near Approaches, as his only Comfort. He stiffly maintains his Integrity, and questions not but if *he were tried, he should come forth like Gold* †. He doubts not of Salvation, but then 'tis in the ‡ other World. He saith, that *all the Days of his appointed Time he will* * *wait till his Change shall come*. But, by that Change, he means *Death*, of which he spake in the Beginning of that Verse, *If a Man die, shall he live again?* or, it may be understood, as a very † great Man would have it, of his Resurrection, of which the following Words are meant, *Thou shalt call and I will answer, thou shalt have a Desire to the Work of thy Hands*. He ‡ craves a little Relaxation of his Torments, but higher than that he does not go; or if he does, crying out, *O that I were as in the Days* * *of old, when the Candle of the Lord shined on my Head*; yet it is but the empty Wish of a Man, who had no Hopes that his sorry *Snuff* should burn long, much less that it should recover its ancient Brightness and Flame; as appears not only from other Places †, but also from the following Words

* *Job* vi. 9, 10. & x. 20. & xvii. 1. † *Job* xxiii. 10. ‡ *Job* xii. 15. * *Job* xiv. 14, 15. † *How's* Blessedness of the Righteous, p. 210, 211, 212. ‡ *Job* x. 20. * *Job* xxix. 2, 3. † *Job* vii. 7.

Words in that same Speech of his (though in the following Chapter) and which was his concluding one too, *Thou liftest me up to the Wind **, *thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my Substance ; for I know thou wilt bring me to Death, and to the House appointed for all Living.*

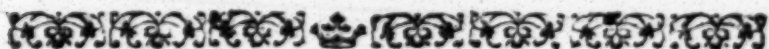
Again, this would be to put such a Construction on these Words, as would be very unsuitable to that pompous Preface wherewith he introduceth them, *viz. O that † my Words were now written ! O that they were printed in a Book !* (so we render this Passage, by way of Allusion to our modern Invention) *That they were graven with an Iron Pen and Lead, in the Rock for ever !* (And then it follows, *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.*) Words too big to usher in so small a Matter as a Restauration of him to his former Happiness here below ; a Thing which good Men, in all Ages, have had but a very mean and slender Opinion of.

Besides, he speaks of such a Happiness as he should have in the *latter Day*, when *after his Skin Worms had destroyed his Body.* And though the Words *Worms* and *Body* are not in the Original, yet they are fitly enough supplied by our Translators. In the *Hebrew* it is, *Tho' after my Skin they destroy this, i. e. this be destroyed,* by a very usual *Hebraism*. They destroy *this*, this Shadow of a Carcase, which methinks

* *Job xxx. 22, 23.* † *Ver. 23, 24.*

thinks he points to with his Finger, this broken, sorry Fragment, that is not worth the Name of a *Body*. His Skin was already broken by his many Sores, and his *Reins* consumed within him; and he expected the miserable Reliques should be eaten up too by the merciless Worms; yet, after all this, *in my Flesh shall I see God*; for which Words, *In my Flesh*, there had been no Occasion, if he had not had his Eye on the Resurrection of the Body at the last Day.

To shut up this. Upon a close Examination of the Place, I cannot but be of the Mind of the most learned *Spanheim*, that this Interpretation is most agreeable to the Words in the Original, and the other is forced and strained.



CHAP. VI.

A third Objection. Of the several Abstracts of our Duty in the holy Scriptures.

Section III. Objection III.

A Nother Plea is drawn from those Words in the Prophet *, *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*
Where-

* *Micah vi. 8.*

Faith in Jesus Christ. 95

Whereupon we are told *, *This Prophet had a shallow Memory, or Mr. M. an ill Judgment: If this be the whole Summary (i. e. of the Duty) which God requires of Man, then there is no such Danger of his being eternally damned, who does not believe all the Articles of the nationally established Faith.* So the Gentleman uses to word it; but he means, though he don't believe so much as *one of the Articles of Christianity*, strictly so called, no, not that of *Jesus of Nazareth's being the Messiah*; if he be but a sober *Deist*, though he affirm Christ to be an *Impostor*, and the Gospel a *Bundle of Lies*, yet he is in a safe State. This is very plain from what he adds, viz. † *I don't think any Question harder to be answered by our Critick Milbourn, than to determine the Time when those of the Jewish Nation, that acted justly, loved Mercy, and walked humbly with their God, began to be damned for not believing the Gospel.* I am no Advocate for Judaism, I take the Jews to be much in the Wrong, but those of them that are just, merciful, and pious, that they should be damned! Bless us! Mr. M. may be as bold as he pleases with them, but I desire to be excused from such an uncharitable Censure. Nay, he takes St. Paul to have been a good moral Man, at that very Time in which he was a Persecutor of the Christians, setting aside his Bigotry for that Religion which was now to be no more. And he fairly insinuates, that he
was

* Vindic. of Mr. T. F. p. 15, 16. † Id. p. 17.

was then in * a State of Salvation, when he called Jesus *accursed*, and compelled his Disciples to *blaspheme* him as a Deceiver. And a little after, saith he, † *Let Mr. M. allow us, but that there is a Duty of Love payable in this World to the Stranger, whose Opinions differ something from the nationally established Faith,* (he means, wholly repugnant to all the Articles of the Christian Faith) *and he shall have full and free Liberty to rant and sling his damning Censures about, as he pleases, with respect to the next. For Men of Virtue (whatever Learning and Acuteness they may want) can contentedly trust their Souls with God, because God is not to be made, as the Magistrate too often has been, the Executioner of the Wrath of the Presbyter.*

Thus far he ; and the Gentleman speaks out, we have his whole Heart, and he gives us the *Key* to open the true Sense and Design of his whole Book ; and, for that Reason I have transcribed so much of what he says.

I now proceed to answer the Argument against the Necessity of Faith in Jesus Christ to Salvation, drawn from the *Summary* of our Duty in the Prophet. And I desire the following Particulars may be considered.

S E C T I O N I.

I. We have very different Summaries or Abstracts of our Duty in the holy Scriptures, and that for very weighty Reasons.

Some-

Sometimes we have in them a Summary of that Duty that is incumbent on us as *rational* Creatures. So it is comprised by *Solomon* in these Two, internal Reverence of God in the Heart, and Obedience to him with our whole Man. *Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole Matter* (saith he) * *Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole Duty of Man.*

At other Times the Whole of it is summed up in † *loving God with all our Heart, Soul, and Mind*, which we are told, is the *first and great Commandment*; and in *loving our Neighbour as our selves, which is the second, and like unto the first*; and on these Two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

At other Times, it is shrunk up into the narrow Compass of Two Words, *Loving another*; and he who doth so, is said to fulfil the Law ‡, though this other be our Neighbour only, without the Mention either of our Creator or Redeemer. *For this, thou shalt not commit Adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false Witness, thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.*

At another Time we have it a little more largely, in denying all Ungodliness and worldly
E Lists,

* *Eccles* xii. 13. † *Matth.* xxii. 37, 38, 39, 40.
‡ *Rom.* xiii. 8, 9, 10.

Lusts, and living righteously, soberly, and godlily *.

All these are brief *Epitomes* of the Duty which is incumbent on us as *reasonable* Creatures.

In other Places we have Abstracts of the Duty we are obliged unto as *fallen* Creatures. Sometimes it is summed up in Repentance and Baptism (which latter is the visible Sign of Mens Profession of their Faith in Jesus Christ.) So, when St. Peter's Hearers were *pricked in their Hearts* for their great Sin in crucifying Christ, to that Degree, that, in the open Assembly, they cried out, *What shall we do to obtain Pardon and Salvation?* He makes them this Reply, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins* †.

At another Time it is summed up in Repentance and Conversion. So the same Apostle, on the like Occasion, *Repent ye therefore and be converted* (and their Infidelity was one of the Sins they were to repent of, and turn from) *that your Sins may be blotted out, when the Times of refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord* ‡.

Sometimes Faith in Christ *alone* is mentioned. So, when the rough and cruel Jaylor's Heart trembled as much through Sense of Sin, as the Foundations of the Prison had done by the Earthquake; and he who had been on the Point

* Titus ii. 12. † Acts ii. 37, 38. ‡ Acts iii. 19.

Faith in Jesus Christ. 99

Point of killing his Body, was become very solicitous about the saving his Soul, *St. Paul* and *Silas* give this Answer to his serious Enquiry, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved* *. Yea, the *Anointing* would flow down from the *Head* of the Family, to the Skirts of his Garments; not only should he himself, but his *House* also hereby be saved.

But, in another Place, both Faith and Repentance too are mentioned. So *St. Paul* comprises the whole of his private Discourses, and publick Sermons, for Three Years together, in these Two Words, and calls *Repentance towards God, and Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, all the Counsel of God*, all that was profitable to his Hearers †, *i. e.* all that was necessary to their Salvation.

These are Abstracts of the Duty incumbent on us as fallen Creatures.

Sometimes we have a Summary of the Duty we are obliged to as *Men*, and as *Sinners* too, joyned together. So saith our Saviour, *This is Life eternal ‡, i. e.* the Way and Means to it, *viz. to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*

At other Times we have *occasional* Abstracts of our Duty, given on purpose to obviate the foul and gross Mistakes of deluded Creatures. Now these are not exact Summaries of our entire Duty, but only some Heads are singled

E 2

out,

* *Acts* xvi. 30, 31. † *Acts* xx. 20, 21. & xxvii. 31. ‡ *John* xvii. 3.

out, such as are most proper to convince and shame those foolish Wretches. And this is an Instance of great Prudence in the sacred Writers. So the Apostle sums the Matter up in Purity and Charity. *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and the Widows in their Affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World**. Religion requires Faith and Worship too, but the Apostle, like a wise Author, does not name these, because he had to do with a vile Generation of Men, who did highly pretend to both of them, so that it was needless to insist on them, and therefore he waves them, and singles out what they were most notoriously defective in, *viz.* Charity and Purity, the more effectually to deal with these Hypocrites, who were all for Faith (such as it was) and were not against Worship, but neglected Holiness and good Works as *dull Morality*. Such a Set of Men there was in *David's* Time, for whose Conviction and Reformation he penned the Fifteenth *Psalms*, and it turns wholly on the Duties of the Second Table, which, no doubt, but the splendid and gaudy Professors of those Days thought but mean and low Attainments, but he assures them, in the Name of God, that the Performance of them was as necessary to their entring into Heaven, as setting our Foot on the *lowest Rounds* of the Ladder, that do almost touch the Ground, is to our getting up to any high Place.

Just.

* James i. 27.

Just such another Abstract doth the Prophet *Micah* give us. The *Jews*, whom he had to deal with, were very zealous for Ceremonies and Sacrifices, and thought that Exactness in them would compensate for the Want of all Sorts of moral Duties. There is a *Conscience* as well as a *Madness*, *quoad hoc*, and these Men were quite gone in it; for all their Religion lay among their Beasts, their Flocks and their Herds. The Prophet therefore, like a skilful Preacher, gives them not an exact *Epitome* of their Duty, but such an one as was much better for them, such an one as might strike them to the Heart, tells them, this is what God requires, but they had grossly neglected, *viz.* *Justice*, *Mercy* and *Humility*.

SECTION II.

II. We must not take one of these Abstracts to the Exclusion of all the rest, much less set it in Opposition to the more full and large Descriptions of our Duty in other Parts of the Bible. It would be a very wild Thing to do so, and thence to conclude, because we have done all that is contained in that one, we shall be saved, tho' we never mind what is contained in the rest, or in any other Places of the Scripture.

Ex. gr. How absurd would it be for a Man to argue thus, *I love God and my Neighbour*, and this is the whole Duty of Man, and there is no Fear of my being eternally damned, tho' I neglect all that is incumbent on me as a *fallen* Creature, and have nothing at all of *Repentance*

rance towards God, or, at least, of *Faith* towards our Lord Jesus Christ?

So, on the other Hand, how foolish would it be for a Man to argue, *I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, which is all that St. Paul required of the Jaylor in order to Salvation, and therefore there is no Fear of my being eternally damned, though this Man wholly neglect what is incumbent on him as a reasonable Creature, and have not a Spark of Love within his Breast, towards either God or his Neighbour?

And, once more, it would be very idle for a Man to take an *occasional* and *partial* Abstract, and argue, as our Author does, there is no Fear of my being eternally damned, though I *never believe on Christ*, yea, though I *blaspheme him as an Impostor*, because I *do justly, love Mercy, and walk humbly with God*; and *Faith in Christ* is not required in that Scripture, nor can it can be ranked under either of those three Heads.

A Man might as well argue, that Temperance and Chastity are not necessary to Salvation, because these are Virtues distinct from, and cannot (at least as to some Branches of them) be referred either to *Justice*, or *Mercy*, or *Humility*. He who talks at this Rate, proves nothing so effectually as this, that his Brains ly in a narrower Compass than his Duty can possibly be crowded into, when it is shrunk up into the shortest Abstract that the Wit of any Man can devise.

In a Word, 'tis the whole Scripture, and not one disjointed Member of it, that is the complete Rule of our Faith and Hope. Tho' we have a Piece, if we have not all that in any Part of the Bible is required of us as absolutely necessary to Salvation, we shall perish; and particularly, if we do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ when he is proposed to us. There is such a Thing as *commuting Penance* among Men, but there's no doing so as to *Duties* which God hath imposed on us. And it will one Day appear, how little Affection soever some Persons may have for him, yet that God hath a greater Love for his only begotten Son, than for any Unbeliever; and that no Virtues will make Atonement for Mens trampling upon the only *Propitiation for our Sins*.

SECTION III.

III. When only one, or a few Duties are put for all Religion, or the Promise of Pardon and Salvation is annexed to them, much more is implied. Others are *supposed*, which are elsewhere required as Instances of our Duty, and as absolutely necessary to those great Ends, tho' they be not express'd in that particular Text of Scripture: Else a Man must be *saved by one Verse of the Bible, and damned by another*; saved as having done this, but damned as having neglected that, which is no less necessary. He would be admitted into Heaven, as having *repented, and being converted to God*, which is all that is required in one Place; and yet must

be cast into Hell, as not having believed on Jesus Christ, which is as expressly required in another under the highest Penalty.

There is a natural Chain and Dependence of one Duty and Grace upon another; so that where one is in Sincerity and Truth, of Course it draws the other after it. For Instance, When the *whole Duty of Man* is said to be *fearing God, and keeping his Commandments*, he who fears God aright, will receive all his Revelations with Faith and Reverence, and under the Noon-day Light of the Gospel, will not neglect that which is *his great Commandment* *, and which he lays so much Weight and Stress upon, *viz.* believing on the Name of his Son.

But I have said somewhat of this Nature † before, and which the Reader may turn to, if he please; and *mutatis mutandis* may easily apply what he finds there to the present Purpose.

This suggests another Consideration. And therefore,

SECTION IV.

IV. Whereas the Prophet says, *What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, love Mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?* He who doth the *last* of these, will bow down his Head before every Revelation God hath made. And when the Command of Believing is inforced

* 1 John iii. 23. † 1 John i. 2.

ced with so plain and severe a Sanction, so often repeated, of being doomed to eternal Flames, if Men don't, he will judge it as much his Interest as his Duty so to do. I have Cause to think, that one of the main Reasons why Men do not embrace the great Truths and Mysteries of the Gospel, is the Want of one of these two Things, either they have no Mind to *walk with God*, or to *walk humbly*. Whereas our blessed Saviour is invested in a threefold Office, perverse Man doth oppose each of these, according to that evil Humour that is most predominant in him. Some are *blotted Pharisees*, so full of Wind and of themselves, so puff'd up with a vain Conceit of their own Righteousness, that they can't stoop to receive him as their *Priest*. Others are *loose Publicans*, and can't endure him as a *King*; his Rule and Government is too strict for them, they can't bear it to be so pinch'd in. And others are, or at least fancy themselves to be *learned Scribes*, and think it is beneath them to assent to the Revelations of this great Prophet, because they can't comprehend them. Pride and Licentiousness were old Causes of Unbelief, according as it is written, *They have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God **, and, *they repented not, that they might believe †*.

SECTION V.

V. Whereas this Gentleman saith, *There is not any Question harder to be answer'd, than*

E 5

10

* Rom. x. 3. † Matth. xxi. 32.

to determine the Time when those of the Jewish Nation, who acted justly, loved Mercy, and walked humbly with God, began to be damned for not believing the Gospel. I answer, Whosoever among them had those Graces in Truth, did believe the Gospel when it was duly proposed to them; and whosoever did not, cannot be truly said to have *walked humbly* with God. And whatever seeming Piety, or real Morality, any unbelieving Jew might be thought to have, yet I am sure, he was liable to eternal Damnation, ever since our Saviour pronounc'd those Words, *I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your Sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your Sins* *. And ever since the Time those Words were written by the Apostle, *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*: (They are doubly lost, as Sinners in general, and so was the whole World, and as Unbelievers too, and on that Account are irrecoverably lost) *In whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them*. †. And therefore,

SECTION VI.

VI. As for that Charge, *the Want of Charity*, I give this Answer to it once for all, That I do not pretend to greater Charity than St. Paul had,

* *Joh. viii. 24.* † *2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.*

had, or than the holy Ghost hath, who is the *Spirit of Love*, by whose Dictate the great Apostle wrote the Passage of Scripture just now mention'd; or than the most merciful and compassionate Saviour of the World hath, who will judge Men that have heard it by his Gospel; and without any Relenting in his Heart, or any softning the severe Doom, will appoint *Ubelievers* their *Portion*, where the *Worm* never dies, and the *Fire* shall never be quench'd.



C H A P. VII.

A Fourth Objection. Works of Charity the only ones mention'd in Matth. xxv.

O B J E C T I O N IV.

I T is further pleaded, *That mere Works of Charity will bring a Man to Heaven, without any Thing of Faith*; because *Works of Charity alone* are mention'd in the xxv Chapter of St. Matthew, where our Saviour gives us an Account of the Proceedings of the great Day. When, we are told, *he will consider, not what the Opinions of Men have been, but what Good they have done to others* *. That *when the Men of all Nations, which includes and implies the Men of all Faiths, shall be judged by*
E 6. our

* *Sermon on the Death of Mr. T. F. p. 111.*

our Saviour, he will make them miserable or happy for ever on the Foot of their good or bad Deeds; their Deeds of Charity, or other Beneficence, without any Respect to their Opinions, to the Doctrines they believed, or thought they had Cause to deny, or to doubt of.*

SECTION I.

Now 'tis very reasonable those should be called to Account for their Opinions in *this World*, who fancy they shall not be so in the *next*. This would be very good News, if it were but true, for Infidels and Apostates, *Turks* and *Jews*, for the whole Rabble of Deists and Debauchees, yea, for Atheists themselves; for the Being of a God, may they say, is an *Opinion*, *that we think we have Cause, if not to deny, yet to doubt of*. If this were so, a charitable Man might be saved, however he carry it with Reference to Christ and his Gospel, in spite of those Words, *How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation* †? And tho' the Apostle adds, *If we sin wilfully* (meaning Apostacy joined with the unpardonable Blasphemy) *after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sins; but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries. Of how much sorer Punishment shall*

* *Sermon on the Death of Mr. T. F.* p. 114. † *Heb.*
11. 3.

shall be be thought worthy, who hath troden under Foot the Son of God, &c.? This Threatning would be but like the Predictions of an Almanack concerning Thunder and Lightning, which no wise Man fears or regards ; and the most profligate Wretch might fare well, notwithstanding that Saying, *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* And on this Principle 'tis impossible to answer that Argument, that *Julian*, for all his vile Revolt, and bitter Persecutions, and repeated Blasphemies, and dying Scoff, *Vicisti Galilæe*, will be found in *Abraham's Bosom* ; for the Renegado was a * charitable Man. Then our blessed Lord was not a little mistaken, when he sent his Disciples to preach this Gospel, and that to every Creature, *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved : But he that believeth not, shall be damned* †. Which is so severe a Threatning, and shall so certainly be executed, that tho' I have pleaded so long for the Necessity of *Faith*, yet I have so much *Charity* for this Gentleman, as heartily to pray, he may never have his Lot among Unbelievers.

SECTION II.

'Tis true indeed, that *Works of Beneficence and Charity* will be peculiarly enquired after, and they are the only ones that are mention'd

* *Op. Juliani*, p. 532. *Edit. Petavii.* † *Mark xvi.*
15, 16.

tion'd in the xxv. of *St. Matthew*; but that is far from being the *only Place*, where we are told of the Proceedings of that great Day. In innumerable other Texts of Scripture we are inform'd, that Men shall give an Account of all the Passages of their Lives, that the Secrets of their Hearts shall be made clear as the Light, and open as the Day; and in particular, Christ will reckon with Men for their Acts of *Injustice*.

This is so plain, that this Gentleman could not but see and remember it, and therefore endeavour to evade it by this cunning Fetch, *That Justice is included in Beneficence, as a lesser Number is in a greater: He that will do me Good, be sure he will do me Right: He that bestows on me what is his, will not defraud me of what is mine. In short, the beneficent Person is always just. Beneficence always comprehends and implies Justice. Our Saviour, aware of this, did not think it necessary to make (there) express Mention of Justice, but only of Beneficence, which always and necessarily implies and includes it* *.

To which I give this double Reply.

SECTION III.

1. This which he has so confidently told us, and repeated it as if he believ'd it to be true, is apparently false, viz. That Beneficence or Charity

* *Sermon on the Death of Mr. T. F. p. 116.*

Faith in Jesus Christ.

III

Charity doth *always* and *necessarily* imply and include Justice in it. He must be a great Stranger to the World, who doth not know that they are frequently separated, and subsist apart. A Thief may rob one Man of his Treasure, and yet, from a Strain of Generosity, may give a Piece of Money to another poor Traveller to help him to his Journey's End. And Instances may be produced of those who have squeez'd some, and yet let their Charity drop, yea, run down very plentifully on others. Alms-houses have been built with Spoil and Plunder, and the Founders of them took special Care before-hand, by their horrible Oppression and Grinding, that when they were erected they should not stand empty.

2. At the last Day, Men shall be reckon'd with for the *whole* of their Behaviour, their Actions, their Words, their Thoughts, yea, and their Faith too: For then God will bring every Work into Judgment; with every secret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil *. Rejoyce, O young Man, in thy Youth, and walk in the Ways of thine Heart, and in the Sight of thine Eyes: But know thou, that for all these Things God will bring thee into Judgment †. Our Lord at his Coming will bring to Light the hidden Things of Darkness, and make manifest the Counsels of the Heart ‡.

And tho' Mens Faith be not mention'd in the xxv. of St. Matthew, yet 'tis in many other Places,

* Eccl. xii. 14. † Eccl. xi. 9. ‡ 1 Cor. iv. 5.

Places, as a Matter that shall then be enquired after :^c Otherwise the *Jews* may come off well enough, and that severe Passage of our Saviour will be but an empty Cloud, in which there is no Thunder, nor so much as one Drop of Water, viz. *If any Man hear my Words, and believe not, I judge him not ; (i. e. I will not do so now) for I came not (now) to judge the World, but to save the World. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my Words, hath one that judgeth him ; the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last Day **.



C H A P. VIII.

A Fifth Objection from our Saviour's Answer to the Lawyer, largely consider'd.

TIS further pleaded †, That a Lawyer asking our Saviour what he should do to inherit eternal Life ? Our Saviour asks him again, what he read in the Law ? He answers, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength, and with all thy Mind ; and thy Neighbour as thy self ‡*. And then comes in the Parable of the good Samaritan. Now, to pass by a great deal of impertinent Banter, I shall only observe a Passage or Two of our Author's on this Subject.

* *John* xii. 47, 48. † *Vindic. of Mr. T. F.* p. 20, 21, 22. ‡ *Luke* x. 25, &c.

ject. I cannot see how he can deny this Parable to denote that a good Man may be saved because of his Works of Mercy, though his Faith be erroneous, (he means tho' he has no Christian Faith at all, strictly so called) without giving his Saviour the Lie, i. e. if to inherit eternal Life and to be saved be the same Thing. For, let it be observ'd, the Lawyer whom our Saviour was instructing, desir'd to know what he should do to inherit eternal Life ; and the Sum of our Saviour's Direction is this, that he should do as the Samaritan did, i. e. be very charitable to a Man in Distress, ay, though he were of another Party or Religion *. And again, saith he, Were it not discreeter to accept the Bounty of unsound Believers, and never let them know that their good Nature will stand them in no Stead at the Day of Judgment †? &c.

Now by way of Reply to this Argument, I shall do these Two Things.

I. Shew the Weakness of it.

II. Enquire into the true Sense and Meaning of this Passage of Scripture.

SECTION I.

I. I will shew the Weakness of this Plea taken hence, to prove that Works of Mercy alone are sufficient in order to Salvation, without Faith in Jesus Christ. The Argument in short is this, our Saviour's Direction is to go and do as the chari-

* Vindic. of Mr. T. F. p. 22. † Id. p. 25.

charitable *Samaritan* did ; and nothing else being mention'd, nothing besides this is necessary that a Man may inherit eternal Life.

But then, this Way of arguing would exclude *Love to God* from being necessary to Salvation, and that expressly contrary to the plain Words of Christ himself. For, upon the Lawyer's Reply in answer to his Question, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, &c. and thy Neighbour as thy self*, our Saviour saith to him, *Thou hast answer'd right, Do this and live, i. e. do both of them.* But our Author throws away the First of these, and with open Violence to the Words, confines them to the Second only, because our Lord, for a peculiar Reason, (of which by and by) enlarges upon that in the Parable of the *Samaritan*. There are some in the World, who are accus'd of having left *Christ* out of their Divinity, and this Gentleman is for dropping the *Father* too. 'Tis very unaccountable, that his Neighbour must be to him not only in the Room of our *Saviour*, but in the Stead of *God* also.

Again, by this way of arguing, Repentance, and all the other Branches of Godliness, and the Whole of Sobriety, are excluded from being necessary to Salvation, for none of these are expressly mentioned. Nothing is so, but barely *Love*; and seeing this Gentleman confines this too to Charity to our distressed Neighbour, the vilest Sor, the most infamous Adulterer, the grossest Idolater, the worst of wicked Men, they are but kind to the Poor, will be Heirs of Heaven ; and then we might invert the Word

Faith in Jesus Christ.

115

of our Lord, and say, *Wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth thither.* I think we shall make a *pretty* Gospel indeed, and a very *fine* Religion of it at last, when we have not only set by Faith in Jesus Christ, as a superfluous Thing, but also cast away Holiness, and Justice and Sobriety after it, as trifling Matters, without any of which a Man may be saved.

SECTION II.

II. I shall enquire into the true Sense and Meaning of this Passage of Scripture, and of another that is parallel to it. Here the Lawyer propounds this Question to our Lord to tempt and ensnare him. To which he replies, *Do this, and live.* But elsewhere, in * Three of the Evangelists, we read of another, called a young Man, and a Ruler, who, with more Honesty, propounds the same Question for Substance as the Lawyer did, *Good Master, what good Thing shall I do that I may have eternal Life?* And the Answer is to the same Effect, *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.* And, upon his demanding which of them, our Saviour instances only in those of the second Table. Now, because this is a Matter of great Moment, and considerable Difficulty to me, I will endeavour, though it be not necessary to

* *Matth.* xix. 16, &c. *Mark* x. 17, &c. *Luke* xiii. 18, &c.

to the silencing the Adversary, to go to the Bottom of this Point.

In order whereunto, I will make these Four following Remarks.

1. The *Jews* had a Fancy, that a bare external Obedience to * one, or at least to a few Commands, was sufficient to Salvation.

Hereupon they thought it best to fix upon one or two of the *greatest*, hoping, if they came up to them, they might the more easily be dispensed with as to the rest. We find it recorded by Two † of the Evangelists, that they enquired of our Saviour, which was *the great Commandment*. And no Wonder they consulted him in the Case, for they were greatly divided about it among themselves. Some were for the Sabbath, others for Circumcision; some for Sacrifices, others for the Traditions of the Elders, the *little By-laws of their Church*; and some few of them for the Duties of Morality, as that Scribe, for Instance, who preferred Love to God and Man before ‡ *all Whole-burnt-offerings and Sacrifices*.

They thought sincere universal Obedience was a long *round about Way*; they were for the shortest Cut to Heaven, and for being very good Husbands in the Matter of eternal Salvation. Methinks there seems to be a *Touch* of this in the Form of wording the Question which the young Man

* Vide *Smith's select Discourse* about the Pharisaical Righteousness. *Bull's Harm.* p. 311, 312.
 † *Matth.* xxii. 35. *Mark* xii. 28. ‡ *Mark* xii. 33.

Ma
good
Lif
conf
We
2
Per
Ob
gion
virt
doth
Eld
he
wha
muf
gle
thin
bed
wilt
(in
obse
the
with
self
cont
And
this
Seco
shalt
nor
Mot

Man propounded to our Saviour, viz. *What good Thing shall I do that I may have eternal Life? q. d.* what particular Precept is the most considerable, by obeying of which, my everlasting Welfare may be most effectually secured?

2. Our Lord, in his Reply, refers both these Persons to the Law of God, not to ceremonial Observances, but the substantial Acts of Religion, and to what was indeed either expressly or virtually the Whole of the divine Law. He doth not direct them to the Traditions of the Elders. If they would do some excellent Thing, he tells them, they could not do better than what God had already prescribed. And they must not take up with trifling Ceremonies, neglecting the weightier Matters of his Law, nor think to compound their Debts by a partial Obedience; but, saith he to the Ruler, *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments* (in the plural Number) all of them must be observed. The same in effect doth he say to the Lawyer, *Do this, and live, i. e.* love God with all thy Heart, and thy Neighbour as thy self, which *is the Law and the Prophets*, and contains the Whole of his Duty in a few Words. And when he descends to Particulars, he puts this young Ruler in Mind of the Duties of the Second Table, *Thou shalt do no Murder, thou shalt not commit Adultery, thou shalt not steal, nor bear false Witness, honour thy Father and Mother**, which he closes with that comprehensive

* *Matth. xix. 18, 19.*

five Rule, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* These are singled out, not to the *Exclusion* of other Duties, unless any Man can prove Love to God, and the several Expressions of it mentioned in the first Table, not to be Commands, nor spoken of in the Law and Prophets; but because, according to the common Strain of the *Jewish* Nation, he was most likely to be defective in these Points, and therefore most of all needed to be put in Mind of them. The Lawyer also is directed by the Parable of the *Samaritan*, to shew Compassion to any miserable Man as his Neighbour, because this was the particular Point he enquired about, and of which he had, according to the common Fancy of his Countrymen, very narrow Notions, and wrong Apprehensions. And our Author doth but too much resemble him, when he tells us, *The Sum of our Saviour's Direction is this, that he should do as the Samaritan did;* for this is the Sum of Christ's Direction, only as to that Part of his Duty, *loving his Neighbour as himself;* but our Saviour had also directed him to *love God* too, as ever he expected to *live, i. e.* eternally, though this was not further enlarged upon, because he asked no Question on this Head. The Sum of our Lord's Direction is, that he should do the one, but not neglect the other, *i. e.* that he should make Conscience of universal Obedience, as ever he expected to see the Face of God, and live; for the whole of our Duty is briefly contained in, and will flow from these Two.

3. This Direction of our Saviour's, if thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments, and, *Do this, and live*, is capable of an evangelical Sense, viz. that, though perfect Obedience be not, yet sincere universal Obedience is necessary in order to Salvation; and so our Saviour says no more than his Apostle afterwards did, *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord* *. Whoever boggles at this, and doubts whether it be a Truth, is a very ignorant Man, and had Need to learn one of the first Principles of the Oracles of God.

But, may some say, doth this look like a Gospel Answer to this Question, *What shall I do to inherit eternal Life?* to reply, *Keep the Commandments* sincerely, and, *Do this, i. e. Love God and thy Neighbour sincerely, and thou shalt live.*

I answer. It will appear to have been so at that Time when it was made, if Two Points be considered.

I. The State of Affairs in those Days. Then there was but a very little known of the Mediation of Christ. There was so great a Cloud on that Doctrine, that the Disciples of our Lord, who of all Men had the greatest Advantage, because of their constant being, and familiar daily Converse with him, yet understood nothing at all of his Death. Though he told them plainly of it, yet they knew not to the last what to make of it. Such a Thought could not enter
into

* *Hebr. xii. 14.*

into their Minds, yea, *Peter* * assumed so much as to rebuke him for speaking of it; and the Two Disciples, after his Crucifixion, speak like Men quite of Heart, *We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel* †. And therefore, as Matters then stood, it would have been of no Use to either the Lawyer or Ruler, who came to our Saviour with their Question, to have told them of *Faith in the Blood and Death of the Messiah*, which we must reasonably suppose they were at least as utterly ignorant of as the Disciples were. This would have quite shocked them, and he who had used such Language, would have been no more understood by them, than if he had spoken in a foreign Tongue. This Doctrine was to them, what ‡ *new Wine*, that is full of Spirits, is to weak old Bottles, which would be burst thereby, and the Liquor poured into them be wholly lost.

Our Saviour indeed, in his Sermon to the People, doth sometimes mention this. He spake to the *Jews*, whom he had miraculously fed with a small Quantity of Provisions *, about the Necessity of eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood. But we know the Issue of this. They who ran after him for the Loaves, ran away as fast from him on his preaching such hard Sayings, which they could not *digest*. They stumbled at what was to them unintelligible Doctrine;

* *Matth.* xix. 22, 23. † *Luke* xxiv. 21. ‡ *Matth.* ix. 17. * *John* vi.

trine; and the Twelve Disciples were ready to revolt also *. Those very Mouths that had eat his Bread one Day, were opened against him the next; and they were so angry on this Occasion, as though they would have eaten him up. He also told *Nicodemus*, that as *Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness*, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believes in him might not perish, but have eternal Life †. But we cannot reasonably suppose, but that this Master in Israel, who was so very a Child, that he could not understand the new Birth, must look on this as Riddle and Mystery. He came by Night to Jesus, and there seems to be almost as much of Darkness on his Understanding, as there was then spread on the Face of Nature.

John the Baptist too told them, He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life ‡; but they understood very little of his Doctrine, who were so blind, that they could not see the Spirit and Power of *Elias* in him that preached it. These Things were spoken by our Saviour and his Fore-runner, not so much for the present Advantage of them who heard them, as for the future Benefit of his Disciples afterwards, when Christ having been dead and raised, the Spirit would bring them to their Remembrance, and open their Understandings fully to take in the Sense and Meaning of them, as it was in other

F

Cases.

* *John* vi. 66, 67. † *John* iii. 14, 15. ‡ *John* iii. 36.

Cases. For when he spake of *rearing up the Temple in Three Days*, meaning it of his Body, it is written, *When he was risen from the Dead*, then they * *remembred, that he had said this unto them, and they believed the Scripture, and the Word which Jesus had said.*

II. This Direction of our Saviour's must be taken in its due Extent and Latitude, when he saith, *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments*, or, *Love God and thy Neighbour, do this, and live, i. e.* provided there be in thee those other Qualifications, or those other Duties be done by thee, that are elsewhere required as absolutely necessary in order thereunto. This *alone* is a sufficient Answer to the Objection I am now considering. 'Tis very usual (as I have already shewn) with the inspired Writers, to name one Duty, meaning it not exclusively, but inclusively †, others are supposed and implied, and taken for granted, it is presumed the Reader would so understand it. Especially it is so, when there is a natural Connexion between what is plainly expressed, and what is only implied. And so it is in the Case now before us. For when our Saviour directs these Persons, saying to the one, *if thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments*; to the other, *Do this, i. e.* Love God and thy Neighbour, *and live*, this did, by plain and evident Consequence, infer the Necessity of Repentance,
yea,

* John ii. 22. See also Luke xxiv. 8. and John xii. 16. † Vid. Chap. 1, 2.

yea, and of Faith too in the Messiah, such a Measure of it I mean, as was indispensably necessary in those Days, considering the Obscurity of the Revelation.

The Necessity of Repentance might easily be gathered hence. While the *Jews* fancied a partial and mere external Obedience, joyned with Sacrifices, was sufficient, they might entertain such a vain Conceit, that they needed no Repentance. But when our Saviour requires Men to keep all the Commandments, which he had several Times, but especially in his Sermon upon the Mount, explained in a spiritual Sense, and told Men it did reach not only to their Actions, but to their *Words* and very *Thoughts*. And when he commands Men to love God *with all their Hearts and Souls, with all their Mind, and all their Strength*, and their Neighbour as themselves, and told them who was their Neighbour, how large and extensive a Word that was! They could not but be sensible, if they were Men of any Thought or Reflection, that this was more than they had done, and consequently Repentance must be absolutely necessary.

Not to add, that the Necessity of Repentance was so plainly revealed, and so often inculcated in the Books of the *Old Testament*, that our Saviour could not but take it for granted, that unless they were very stupid Readers of them, they must needs understand so much.

And when he taught Men to love God *with all their Hearts*, it would naturally follow from thence, that they would believe on the Messiah,

according to that Measure of Light which they had then about him. Not to add, that the Doctrine of *the Seed of the Woman, that was to bruise the Serpent's Head*, was the very Foundation on which the Church hath been built ever since the Fall. Sure I am that Christ himself resolves the *Jews* Infidelity, into their Want of divine Love as its proper Cause. *Ye will not come to me that ye might have Life **. But what is the Spring of this? that we have in the following Words, *I know you, ye have not the Love of God in you †*. And again, *He that hateth me, hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the Works which no other Man did, they had not had Sin; but now have they both seen and hated me, and my Father also ‡*. To which let me add, that when the Scribe approved of that Saying of our Lord's, that *loving God* was the *first and great Commandment*, and *loving our Neighbour* was the *next* to it, our Saviour saith to him, *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God **, *i. e.* from owning me to be the Messiah. He had as near a Disposition as such right Principles could give him, which, if they had been followed, would have naturally led him on to the acknowledging and embracing of him.

But now here I expect to be asked, If any Man should come to me with the same Question, *What shall I do to be saved?* whether

I

* *John* v. 40. † *Ver.* 42. ‡ *John* xv. 23, 24.
 * *Mark* xii. 34.

I would give him this Answer, *Keep the Commandments, and thou shalt enter into Life; love God and thy Neighbour sincerely; do this, and live.*

To which I answer, This is not the *first*, much less the *only* Thing I would say to him. Matters now are very much altered; the Mediation of Christ and his Death are now cleared up, and Christ himself, by his Spirit and Apostles, hath taught me to begin my Answer, by exhorting him to Repentance towards God, and Faith towards himself, in his Blood and Merits. And I would, as well as I could, consider the State of that Man's Soul, and accordingly insist more, and dwell longer upon the one or the other of these. If I thought he was not duly humbled, and broken for Sin, I would open the Nature, and urge the Necessity of Repentance. If I had Reason to conclude, that he was a truly contrite Soul, and ready to be swallowed up with Despair, I would open to him the Nature, End, Value, and Sufficiency of the Death of Christ, and urge upon him the Benefit and Necessity of Faith in his Blood. And if he were a sick Man, and so indisposed for, and incapable of any other but ejaculatory Prayer, I would conclude my Advice by minding him of the Publican's Petition, *God be merciful to me a Sinner* *. But then I would tell him, that we now knowing more of the one Mediator, whom *God hath set forth as a Propitiation* through

F 3

* Luke xviii. 13.

through Faith in his Blood, than ever the Publican did, that he should be sure not to forget to add thereunto, *for the sake, and through the Righteousness and Death of Jesus Christ*. But then, in its proper Place, I would endeavour to fasten this upon him, that, as ever he expects to be saved, he must through Grace sincerely resolve to keep all the Commandments of God, and if God give him Life, he must actually do it, and not be *partial* in God's Law. And whosoever doth not, as to the Substance of it, thus treat a Man who asks him, *What shall I do to be saved?* instead of being a Gospel-preacher, is, in short, and to speak plainly, no better than a Deceiver of the Souls of Men, and one who daubs with untempered Morter.

And so much for this Third Remark, that this Direction of our Saviour is capable of an evangelical Sense.

There is one Remark more to be made upon upon it; and therefore,

4. I add, this Direction of our Saviour's may be taken in a *legal* Sense too, *viz.* You must perfectly love God and your Neighbour, perfectly keep all his Commandments, if you will inherit eternal Life, without any one single Breach, either in Deed, Word, or Thought. But then, he did this with an *evangelical Intent and Design*. He was far from countenancing such a damnable Error, that any Man could be saved by the Deeds of the Law.

But he laid the Law before them in its Extent and Spirituality, to break and humble them, and convince them that there was no
Hopes

Hopes of entring into Heaven *this Way*, the Law requiring more than ever they had done for the Time past, or were capable of doing for the future ; that so despairing of Salvation *that Way*, they might seek it elsewhere. And in this our blessed Lord did no more than his Father had done before, and his Apostles, by the Direction of his Spirit, did after his Resurrection, lay the Law in its Strictness and Severity before Men, that so they might be induced to flee to the *promised Seed*, to be justified by an humble broken-hearted Faith in him.

And this was so much the more necessary, because both of these Enquirers were *right Jews*, and *trusted in themselves that they were righteous*. *All these have I kept from my Youth up* *, faith the one, tho' he was deeply in Love with *this World*. And the other was *willing to justify himself* † ; he was for being saved, not as an humble penitent Sinner, but as a just Man. Our Lord would repress this proud *Pharisaical Humour* of his ; and to that End sets the Law in a due Light before him, to prepare him, if he had attended to it, for the Gospel ; and by the Parable of the *Samaritan*, convinces him from his false and narrow Notion about this Matter, who was his Neighbour, that he did not so much as *understand* the Precept, much less had he yielded a perfect Obedience to it.

* *Matth. xix. 20.* † *Luke x. 29.*

C H A P. IX.

A Sixth Objection. St. Peter's Words, He that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him, consider'd. A bold Saying, and a Popish Legend.

O B J E C T I O N VI.

ANother Objection is raised from the Words of St. Peter, with Reference to Cornelius, *Of a Truth I perceive that God is no Respector of Persons; but in every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him* *. Whereupon we are told, *There's no Necessity of a thorough Christian Faith to recommend a Gentile to God's Acceptance* †. He means, there's no Necessity of *any* Faith at all in Christ. If his Argument will prove any Thing, it will prove as much as that comes to. Peter perceived the Necessity of no more than fearing God, and working Righteousness. And as for what little Things Mr. M. is capable of objecting from the Context, I am (saith our Author) well aware of; but I purposely leave that Side unguarded, well knowing in what Trap I shall catch him ‡.

S E C.

* Acts x. 34, 35. † Vindic. of Mr. T. F. p. 19.
‡ Id.

SECTION I.

This is a very civil Gentleman, to beat the *Drum* to give his *Enemy* fair Notice, before he sets Fire to the Train. If after such a *Warning* I be blown up into the Air, I must thank my self: But to secure my self as well as I can, I will remind the Reader of the true State of the Question, which is not, Whether an honest Heathen, who never heard the Gospel, may be saved without an explicate Knowledge of, or Faith in Jesus Christ? This is a Point which (as I have said once and again) I will have nothing to do with. Our Question is, Whether (pretended) Piety and Virtue is sufficient to the Salvation of an Infidel, to whom the Gospel is duly proposed and preached, tho' he do not believe on Jesus Christ? Now, tho' I do not affirm, yet for the present I will suppose such a Heathen, before the Gospel is preached to him, to be in a State of Salvation; all that I am concerned to maintain is this, That when Jesus Christ and his Gospel are proposed to him, he is bound to believe and embrace them, on the Penalty of *forfeiting his Salvation*. And this is very plain, from the Instance of *Cornelius* himself, (tho', by the Way, I don't reckon him to be a mere Heathen, but one of the *Σαδουκαῖοι**, a *Jewish* Profelyte, a Worshipper of the God of *Israel*, and one who had an implicate Belief

F 5

of

* Vide J. Mede's *Discourses*, 3, 11, and 33.

of the Messiah.) In the Verses immediately following these Words, *In every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him*, we read that Peter preached Jesus Christ to him in all his Offices, *That Peace is by him*, procured by his Death, that *he is Lord of all*, and God had *anointed him*; that he was *crucified, raised again, and is ordained to be the Judge both of the Quick and Dead*. And then closes his Sermon with these most remarkable Words, *To him give all the Prophets Witness, that through his Name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive Remission of Sins* *. Now can any Man, after such a Sermon, and such a Conclusion of it, ever imagine, that *Cornelius*, or any of his House, could have been saved, tho' they had not believed on Jesus Christ, but rejected him as an Impostor? No Man can suppose such a Thing, especially if hereunto be added what the Angel said to *Cornelius* himself about this Matter, *viz. Go and send for Peter, who shall tell thee Words, whereby thou and all thy House shall be saved* †. 'Tis unaccountable to suppose that he might have been saved, tho' he had not regarded on Syllable of what Peter had said unto him.

In short, no Man *among us*, to whom the Gospel is preach'd, can be term'd a *true Fearer of God*, if he be not also a *Believer* on Jesus Christ. To the *Fear of God*, and *working of Righteousness*, add Faith in, and Love to the

Son.

* Acts. x. 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 43. † Acts xi. 14.

Son of God, and you have the complete Character of one that is accepted of God. But if a Man to whom the *Gospel is preached*, remain an Unbeliever, he is not a true Fearer of God; for if he was, he would *kiss the Son* in Obedience to his Command. He is not a *true Worker of Righteousness*, for if he was, he would work *this Work of Faith*, submitting unto the Law of God, he is not accepted of God, but rejected by him; and for all the *Works of Righteousness* that he may pretend to, and value himself upon, he shall perish for ever, and the *Wrath of God*, which now smokes against him, will break forth into a devouring Flame. O that Men were wise, and would consider before it be too late!

SECTION II.

And now I have answer'd all the *Reasons* and *Arguments* that have been brought to overturn the Necessity of Faith to Salvation, and to establish the Sufficiency of bare Morality, or mere Charity, in order thereunto.

I have not indeed answer'd *all* that hath been written, for there remains somewhat more, which I shall not dignify with the Name of *Argument*, or *Reason*, tho' urged by those who are such high Pretenders to it. Two *Things*, I think, we had best to call them, the one is a bold Saying, the other an idle Popish Legend.

SECTION III.

The bold Saying is this, *viz.* That *Faith*, at the best, is but a dextrous and lucky Way of Thinking, but *Charity to the Poor is Well-doing*. This we sometimes meet with in *Conversation*, and 'tis urged to exclude the Necessity of Faith in order to eternal Life. They who use it, have borrowed it from a modern *Unitarian* *, who also saith a few Lines before, *If a right Faith also had been necessary to Salvation, it must have been expressly named* †. Whether Faith be not expressly required to Salvation, the Reader may see, if he will but look back to the Third Chapter of this Discourse.

But I take it, that right Believing is *Doing*, and *Well-doing* too; for else he who believes the Gospel doth do *nothing* at all, or doth an ill Thing. I have always thought the Habit of Faith is an holy Principle, and that to say an *Act* of Faith, is good Sense, and sound Divinity too.

And a right Belief is the necessary Foundation of evangelical Obedience. If I don't believe aright concerning Jesus Christ, I cannot trust in him, nor devote my self to him, nor obey him, nor do every Thing in his Name, nor make the spreading of his Honour, and promoting his Interest, the End of my Life: All
which,

which, by the Gospel, I am bound to do, as ever I hope to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

The Root and Foundation of this *bold and wicked Saying* is this, *viz.* a vain Imagination, that the supreme, if not the only End of Religion in general, and Christianity in particular, is the Welfare of our Neighbour: Whereas it is clear as the Sun at Noon-day, that tho' this be *one* End, yet it is but a meaner and lower one. The *chief* Ends are, the Glory of God, and the Honour of Christ, in Conjunction with the eternal Salvation of our Souls. And sure I am, that an Unbeliever, for all his *Well-doing* to his Neighbour, doth not consult any of these.

SECTION IV.

The other Thing that is urged, is *an idle Popish Legend*. It is an extraordinary Piece, and therefore the Reader shall have it drawn at Length in their own Words, lest, if I should endeavour to contract it, he should lose any of the Beauties of it, *viz.* *The Punishment of Judas, who betray'd our Saviour, is, that he stands on the Surface of a swelling dreadful Sea, with his Feet somewhat below the Water, as if he were about to sink— Besides his continual Horror and Fear of going to the Bottom, a most terrible Tempest of Hail and Wind always beats on the Traytor's naked Body and Head; he suffers as much by Cold, and the Smart of the impetuous Hail, as 'tis possible to*
imagine

*imagine that he could suffer by the Fire of Purgatory, or of Hell. But— in this great Distress, Judas has one very great Comfort and Relief; for, whereas the Tempest would be importable ('tis my Author's own Word) if it beat always upon him from all Sides, at a little Distance from him, and somewhat above him, there is stretched out a Sheet of strong, coarse Linen Cloth, which Sheet intercepts a great Part of the Tempest. Judas regales himself, by turning sometimes one Side, sometimes another Side of his Head and Body to the Shelter of this Sheet. In short, the Sheet is such a Protection to him, that it defends him from the one Half of his Punishment. But by what meritorious Action, or Actions, did Judas deserve so great a Favour? He gave just the same Quantity of Linen Cloth to a certain poor Family for Shirting *. Now, our Unitarian Author † is much concern'd, that he hath forgot the Name of the Author of this notable Story, and the Subject of that precious Book, wherein he read it above Forty Years ago. However, upon this Text he gives us the following observable Comment, viz. *It had been impossible that this Gentleman should hit on such a Conceit as this, but from our natural Opinion of the Value and Merit of Charity; it seems to us a Virtue so excellent, that it may excuse even Judas from some Part of his Punishment ‡. It seems**

* *The Life of Mr. T. Firmin*, p. 79, 80. † *Id.* p. 79. ‡ *Id.* p. 81.

seems a *single Act* of Charity, tho' it extended no further than giving a little *Einen Cloth*, is a meritorious one in *Judas*; whether he thinks the Obedience, Death and Sufferings of our blessed Saviour to be so, I am not at Leisure to enquire.

Our Author *inclines to think, that divers others may be as well pleased with the Wit of this Tale, and the Moral implied in it, as he himself is* *.

Next to *strong and fair Reason*, methinks *refined Wit* is the most charming Beauty that a Man can look upon. I must confess I perfectly dote upon it, wherever I do see it; but for my Life I am not able to discern the Ingenuity of this Story. If there be any Wit in it, 'tis as poor as the Family *Judas* relieved, and altogether as *coarse* as the Traitor's *Canvass* could possibly be.

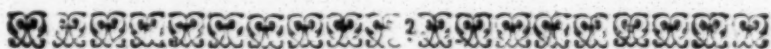
As for the *Moral* of it, I can make no better of it than this, That *Charity alone* will never save a Man from Hell. And tho' he give away ever so much Shirting to the Poor, so as to have a great many Sheets of *thick Canvass*, not upon one Side only, but all round about him, 'twill prove but a thin sorry Defence from the furious Storms of divine Vengeance, when they come beating down upon him.

Methinks, there's somewhat of Mystery in this that an *Unitarian* should have so great a Love for *Judas*; whether it be because he bore the

Bag,

* *The Life of Mr. T. Firmin, p. 81.*

Bag, or *betrayed* our Saviour, I shall not enquire. One would imagine, that some Mens Hearts do misgive them, and that they are conscious to themselves that they shall go to Hell, and therefore they are for making it a tolerable Place, and providing some Refreshments for themselves against their Arrival there. I would advise them as a Friend, rather to take heed that they do not fall into it; for, to *regale* themselves in Hell, (as our Author's Word is) I believe is such Language, as the miserable Wretches, who in the Midst of a Lake of Fire and Brimstone, can't get one Drop of *Water* to cool the Tip of their Tongues, do not understand the Meaning of.



The C L O S E.

HAVING now gone through what I principally intended, there are a few Things I would press the Reader to, and so put an End to this Discourse.

S E C T I O N I.

I. That he would continue stedfast in the Faith of the Gospel. Be not shaken in Mind by those Winds of false Doctrine, which from Hell beneath are blowing among us. Salvation depends upon Perseverance. If any Man *draw back*, it is to *Perdition* *. When many of
Christ's

* *Heb. x. 38, 39.*

Christ's *Disciples went back, and walked no more with him*, said he to the Twelve, *And will ye also go away?* Simon Peter, in the Name of them all, answers, *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the Words of eternal Life **. And he hath the Words of eternal Death too, which he will judicially pronounce against every Infidel and Apostate at the last Day, whose Sentence shall never be revers'd, and from whom there lies no Appeal. Ere long he shall appear in all his Majesty and Glory †; then every Eye shall see him, and Multitudes of Men shall *wail* because of him, but the Cry and Howling will be louder than ordinary among these Wretches. How will they hang down their Heads, not knowing which Way to look, when, for denying Christ, they shall be denied by him in the Presence of all his holy Angels! And with what an *Emphasis* will those Words be pronounced by him upon these Fools, *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire*. Wherefore let us always *abide in him*, that when he shall appear, we may have Confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his Coming ‡. But in order thereunto, let every professed Christian see to it,

SECTION II.

II. That his Faith be an operative, practical, and obediential one. If we have no better a Faith

* John vi. 67, 68, 69. † Rev. i. 7. ‡ 1 John ii. 28.

Faith than that of Devils, we shall not have a better Portion than theirs. God will not be put off with Smoke instead of a Sacrifice. We must not think to impose upon him, as *Jacob* did upon his aged Father, and get the Blessing, if we are not the right Persons to whom it does belong. For, tho' God be the *Ancient of Days*, yet he is not dim-fighted, as old *Isaac* was; tho' we appear in the Garments of our elder Brother, having put on *Christ* by an external Profession, he can easily see the want of Sincerity within. Do but seriously consider what our blessed Saviour saith to this Purpose, *Then shall ye begin to say, We have eat and drunk in thy Presence, and thou hast taught in our Streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence you are, Depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity* *. q. d. The very Plea you make for your selves, is an Aggravation of your Crimes. *I taught in your Streets*, you say, why then you were better instructed, and can't pretend you continued in Sin for want of Knowledge. Have you indeed *eat and drunk in my Presence*? By so doing you openly professed your selves to be my Disciples; in every Sacrament you had all the Arguments against Sin that might have been drawn from my bitter and bloody Death and Passion represented to you, and you renewed your Covenant of Fealty and Obedience to me; and yet, after all this, to prove *Workers of Iniquity*! Hereupon this Plea will be immediately over-ruled in

* Luke xiii. 26, 27.

in a disdainful Manner. *Then shall ye begin to say, q. d.* This is so idle, so impertinent, so foolish an Argument for an ungodly Wretch, that I will not have Patience to hear it. I will immediately cut off such foolish Babblings, I will cast out this Defence without any more ado. And then *he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence you are.* I scorn to be thought to have had any Relation to you, or any Respect for such as you, and therefore *depart from me into outer Darkneſs*, that you may never be seen more, and into a Place most remote from me, where you shall receive the just Reward of all your evil Deeds.

But as I have pressed Obedience in the general, so I shall endeavour to perswade to one particular and signal Instance of it. And therefore,

SECTION III.

III. If my Reader be able, I shall call upon him to shew the Truth of his Faith by abounding in this Grace and good Work, *viz. Charity to the Poor*, especially where he finds Poverty and serious Religion dwelling under one and the same Roof. And I will insist longer on this, because, though I will not give all to Charity, as they do whom I have been writing against, yet I will allow it its due Place, which is more than worldly-minded Men are willing to afford it, but yet I will not advance it higher than the holy Scriptures do. The Apostle bids *Ti-mothy charge them that are rich in this World,*
that

that they do Good, that they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in Store for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life *. Were they not the Words of an inspired Apostle, they would hardly seem consistent either with Prudence, or with good Manners, if we consider the Persons concerned in them, *the Rich in this World*, the Way and Manner of Application to them, and that is under the Notion of a Charge, the Matter and Substance of that Charge, that they would voluntarily and readily give away a considerable Share of their dear earthly Treasure, and the Man who is to give this Charge, and that is *Timothy*, a Minister, and one of the younger Sort too, and under low Circumstances, and jealous Men might be apt to suspect, when he bespeaks a liberal Relief for others, he really means his poor Self.

Mens Spirits naturally rise with their Fortunes, as every light and floating Substance doth with the Increase of the swelling Water, on the Top whereof it swims. That Body of Men who have the Power of giving Money, reckon, of Course, they have a Power of giving Laws too. Wealthy Men do naturally expect it as their due, to be applied unto with a great deal of Address and Ceremony, with mighty Courtship, and lowly Submission, that the Words of all who speak to them, should be as fine and as soft

* 1 *Tim.* vi. 17, 18, 19.

soft as the Garments they themselves wear. To come to them with a Charge, is such a coarse Handling, as they can by no Means endure, especially if you would engage them to part with a considerable Sum of Money. 'Tis as laborious a Work to fetch the Silver and Gold out of the sealed Bags and Iron Chests of some of them, as it was originally to dig and draw it out of the Mine. And, to complete the Parallel, he that attempts it must ordinarily expect to be their Slave. They will turn a Piece of Money up and down, and look very wistly upon it; and how little Respect soever they may have for his Person, or Government, truly the Image of *Cesar* upon his Coin is exceeding beautiful and charming, they dearly love him there, and he hath won and perfectly captivated their very Hearts; yea, even those that are of a better Temper, generally look for very warm Applications, and a very tender Handling, you must be sure to strike them in the right Vein too, or else there is little Hope that they will bleed freely.

They may make a Shift to bear with it in an aged *Paul*, whose gray Hairs may give some Authority, and command some little Respect, they will shew so much Breeding as to give the old Man the Hearing; but if it be a young *Timothy* that speaks to them in so bold a Manner, he must expect they should despise his Youth and Charge both together, shut their Ears as close as they do their Hands, and send the sawcy Babblor away with as much Contempt and Scorn as they would dismiss
the

the Poor withal, whose Cause he hath espoused.

But yet, notwithstanding all these Disadvantages, a divine Commission gives a Man Authority and Courage too. The Apostle puts the *Warrant* into *Timothy's* Hand, and requires him to serve it upon the greatest of them all. *Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be rich in good Works, &c.* And to prevail with them to raise a considerable Sum, he orders him to promise them the greatest Interest on a Fund of the best Credit, where they need not fear any Deficiencies, viz. the Word of God, who hath assured Men, that this is to *lay up for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that so they may lay hold on eternal Life*. The Result of the whole is this, that the right Exercise of Charity to the Poor is necessary to the Salvation of the Rich.

And we cannot look upon the Garb, and the Figure that several do make, or view the Places where they are seated in some of our religious Assemblies, but we must conclude there are many such. We may find them in the Front, the uppermost Seats, and there they look like a capital Letter in the Beginning of a Book, with a mighty Flourish round about it. We cannot look them in the Face, nor lift up our Eyes to the Top of their Heads, but we may presently see they have their Superfluities, enough and to spare; and it would be an unpardonable Reflection upon their Honesty, or their Prudence, if we should make any Doubt of their Quality.

But

But yet, when they who so richly deck and adorn themselves, are called upon to *honour God with their Substance*, they grow wonderfully modest and shy of a sudden. They who with a great deal of Briskness press'd forward before, fall back in a Moment. They are like the *sensitive Plant*, that spreads widely on every Side, but if you touch it with your Finger, immediately it shrivels and shrinks up into a very small and narrow Compass.

This therefore had Need to be a little stated, who are rich Persons, lest some should fancy themselves not to be within the Verge of the apostolical Text, though they really are, and thereupon think themselves excused from the Duty of it, and so, by wrong Notions and covetous Practices, distinguish themselves out of the Reward of it, eternal Life.

We no sooner hear the Sound of this Word, a *rich Man*, - but we are presently apt to think of a vastly over-grown Estate, whereas the true Standard by which we ought to measure, is, the Circumstances of a Man's Condition in the World, his Birth and Education, his Rank and Quality, his Family and Children, and the Post wherein Providence hath set him. Men of high Descent, or numerous Families, or in publick Stations, need more than a single and obscure Person, or a private Man. The same Quantity of Water, that would almost drown a low and small Plant, may be far from being sufficient for a great Tree that has a large Root to suck, and many Branches to feed. Hence it is that we

have poor Landlords, and rich Tenants, poor Noblemen and rich Citizens *. As there are cold Days in Summer, and warm ones in Winter, that is, considering the Season of the Year. He who hath wherewith to supply all that Necessity and Decency does require, and all Things being considered which ought to be laid in the Balance, hath besides somewhat considerable to spare, is a rich Man, though he hath not his Hundreds *per annum*.

But if, after all, any should shuffle, and refuse to be accounted and called rich, yet shall he not so escape. If he flee from this Text of Scripture, he shall not avoid the Edge of another, written by the Pen of the same Apostle, *viz. Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the Thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth **. The former Part of the Precept I would hope my Reader is not concerned in, *Let him that stole, steal no more*, and therefore I drop that. But they are but very few who will not come within the Compass of the latter; tho' they are Handicraftsmen, and live by their daily Labour, they should, if possible, earn somewhat for the miserably poor, as well as for themselves.

Having thus just stepped aside to speak a Word to the meaner Sort, I return to the Company I left, I mean the *Rich in this World*, whom I must put in Mind of their Duty, and the right

Ex-

* Robison's Observ. p. 155. † Eph. iv. 28.

Exercise of it also; they must not only give, but do it liberally too. Indeed God hath not told us exactly, and particularly how much every one should give, and therefore I shall leave it, as he has done. The civil Power may levy a Tax, and appoint every Man his *Quota*; but I do not find this does belong to a Minister of the Gospel. Let Men rate themselves (for that they like best) but let them not deceive themselves, for they cannot deceive God, nor will he be mocked. Every Man is to judge for himself, for every one may be presumed to know his own Condition better than another. But let every one so judge, as being under a very serious Sense, that he himself, and this whole Matter, will be judged over again, by one who doth expect to reap according to what he hath sown, and that his Poor shall receive much, where he hath given much. No Man can think, that a single Grain or two of Wheat, is an answerable Thank-offering to God, who hath given him an Increase of Thirty or Sixty, or it may be an Hundred-fold, blessed their Seed, and caused it to spring up into a very plentiful Harvest.

The Apostle hath laid down a Rule in the general, wherein there is a manifest Equity, *according as God hath prospered every Man* *. But if we should take an Estimate by that sorry Pittance that many give, we must conclude, God hath prospered them but very little, and they have made but poor Gains by their respective Employments. The Ground wherein are very rich Mines of Silver and Gold, is often rocky
G
and

* 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

and barren, and brings forth little for the Feeding of any living Creature. These hard and close Men will be made, ere long, to know it was their Duty to give with an open Hand, and a large Heart.

For the *Grace* of a Kindness is many Times lost by the awkward Manner of doing it. 'Tis so with Reference to Man, but much more with Reference to God, who sees the inward Frame and Temper of our Minds, whether what we bestow be wrung from us by Importunity, like Water extorted from a Stone by the mere Force of the Fire; and then too, the little comes dully away, by slow Drops, one now, and another anon; or whether it come from a warm Spring of Love, liberally pouring forth its cool Streams for the refreshing of any dry and thirsty Traveller, or filling any empty Vessel that is brought unto it.

That Charity to the Poor is a necessary Means on the rich Man's Part to the attaining of that blessed End, appears from its being laid down as a Mark and Sign of the Truth of those Graces and Duties, which are indispensably required unto Salvation. He is a very absurd Man, who can imagine any one shall be saved, who hath no *true Religion*. Now, * *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and the Widow*. 'Tis to do it so, as to help and relieve them, not in an idle Compliment. Such a Visit is like the Religion of him who makes it, there is nothing in either one or the other. To speak plainly, a *godly covetous Man* is just such another Monster

Faith in Jesus Christ.

147

as a religious Sot, and a very pious Whoremonger ; a Creature of Man's making, consisting of absolute Impossibilities, and grossest Contradictions.

No Man can be so mad as to hope any one shall reach Heaven, who is wholly void of *Love to God*. Now, whatever fleeting Passion a Man may have, the Scripture will not allow it to pass for *Sterling*, but tells us it is counterfeit Coin, if we have no Regard to the Poor. How plain are those Words of the Apostle, *Whoso hath this World's Goods, and seeth his Brother have Need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him.** ? He supposes this to be a very plain Case, and therefore propounds it by way of Question, appealing to any indifferent Man. And if the hardned Miser himself entertain so sottish a Conceit that he hath the Love of God in him, it is Demonstration that he hath as little of Sense as he hath of Charity.

No Man who reads and believes his Bible, can imagine he shall be saved without Faith. Now, St. James telleth us, *That which is void of good Works, is no more saving Faith, than a mere Carcase, without any Life in it, is a Man*. And such a senseless Lump the covetous Niggard is, if he please himself with the ilde Hopes of Heaven ; his Understanding is departed from him (if ever he had any.) His Eyes are gone, for he cannot see Christ in any of his poor Members, whose sorry Garments, so full of Holes, do rather shew their Nakedness, than cover it. His Hand is stiff, he cannot open,

G 2.

nor.

* 1. John iii. 17.

nor reach it out to a needy Object, though it stand close by him. He has no Soul, he is spiritually dead, for he is buried in this World, and the next Tidings we hear of him, must be the same with that which is reported of his elder Brother, St. *Luke's* Fool, that he is in Hell. For it must always be remembered, that relieving the Poor is one Sort of good Works, and he is a very bad Man who neglects that, how much soever he may abound in the cheaper Duties of Praying and Hearing, and receiving the Lord's Supper.

No Christian can suppose any Man among us can be saved without Love to our blessed Saviour, if he should see him stand before his Door hungry, thirsty, and naked, and yet refuse him any Relief. The apostolical Censure is left on Record, *Let such a Man be Anathema Maranatha* *. And Christ himself hath said, *In as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me* †. And he hath forewarned us of the Doom which in this Case shall be pronounced by himself, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels* ‡. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat, &c. *g. d.* You would not afford me hardly a Morsel of Bread, or a Draught of Drink, and for that you shall not have a Drop of Water to cool the Tip of your enflamed Tongues. You would not visit me in Prison, and therefore you shall be cast into a Dungeon, where you shall never see my Face. You would not clothe me when I was naked, and, for that Reason, you shall be covered with Confusion as with a Garment. I was a

Stranger,

* 1 Cor. xvi. 22. † *Matth.* xlv. 45. ‡ *Ver.* 41, 42.

Stranger, and you looked upon me as such, neglected me as if you did not know me, and therefore now I will not acknowledge you. You would not hear my Cry, nor will I regard yours. You shut up your Bowels of Compassion from me, and my Gates shall be shut against you. Those Mouths that only said, *Be ye filled, and be ye clothed*, shall in vain be opened to cry for Mercy, which you would never shew. Those empty Hands which were so often stretched forth, and lifted up to Heaven in vain, but never opened to me on Earth, shall be bound in everlasting Chains. Those petrified Bowels, those Hearts of Rock and Flint shall be melted down in the Flames of Hell, for nothing else could make them to flow.

This solemn Account of the Proceedings of the last Day shews, That doing Good, especially to them that *are of the Household of Faith*, must not be dwindled away into a mere Sign, and be look'd for only in the Retinue of other Graces and Duties; 'tis a distinct Grace and Duty of it self, and under that Notion required as absolutely necessary to Salvation. Texts of Scripture might be heaped up to this Purpose. I wish some Men would turn to their Bibles, that their own Eyes might satisfy them; whether in those Editions of them which are in their Hands, there are such Words as these, *I say unto you, Make to your selves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting Habitations* *. There are few who need to be told what *Mammon* is, and many covetous Men do well enough understand what the *Mammon of Unrighteousness* is, tho' not in that Sense wherein

* Luke xvi. 9.

wherein our Saviour meant it; for he doth not mean that which is gotten by unjust Dealings. God hates Robbery for a Burnt-offering, and will not accept of a stolen Beast when it bleeds at his Altar. But by the *Mammon of Unrighteousness* is meant unfaithful deceitful Riches, that, like wicked Servants, often run away from their Owners, and give their Masters the Slip. Lay these out against a Time of Need, *when ye fail*. 'Tis appointed to all Men once to die, and then every Man proves a Bankrupt to that Degree, that *Flesh and Heart will fail*. I have often thought of that Saying of the Apostle, *We brought nothing into this World with us, and it is certain we shall carry nothing out* *. The former is altogether as certain as the latter, and yet the Word is applied to that only. 'Tis a Mercy that God hath order'd it so; had it been otherwise, the World had been impoverish'd long ago by plentiful Returns into the other State: All had been born away many Ages since by our greedy Forefathers, and not a Foot of Land been left for their Posterity, so much as to stand upon. We, as well as they, must leave all behind us, and therefore it is good Husbandry to use that, of which at the best we are but Tenants for Life, that when we fail and die, and shall not have a Penny to take away with us, *they may receive, i. e. by an usual Hebraism, we may be received into everlasting Habitations*.

We have no Reason to think it hard, if the *Earth-worm* be not taken in. *Misers* are, in God's Account, some of the vilest of Sinners. They are called *Adulterers* and *Adulteresses*, who

* 1 Tim. v. 3.

Faith in Jesus Christ.

151

who are the *Friends of this World*, much more do they deserve that infamous Character, who are its doting Lovers. *Covetousness* is declared to be *Idolatry*, and a God of Silver and Gold is no better a Deity than one of Wood and Stone; only the *Metal* is so, the Worshippers of one and the other are equally wicked and stupid. The Apostle could not think or speak without Tears in his Eyes on those who *mind earthly Things* *, and when he writes about them, his Pen leaves this great Blot upon them, *They are Enemies to the Cross of Christ*, and then of Course it follows, their *End is Destruction*. It were easy to shew in more Scriptures than one, where they are placed among the most abominable Wretches. It shall suffice to take Notice of that wherein we are more particularly concern'd, because 'tis a Prophecy of the *last Days*, which, by the Character of the Persons, as well as by the Help of History and Chronology, we are sure are come upon us. We are told, that then *Men shall be Boasters, proud, Blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural Affection, Truce-breakers, false Accusers, incontinent, fierce, Despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, Lovers of Pleasures more than Lovers of God* †. See what a Regiment here is, *black as that Hell it self*, whither they are hastning apace. Now *Lovers of themselves*, and of none besides, who also are *coverous*, are in the *Head* of them, and march in the foremost Rank. And no Wonder if we meet them, like some Deserters when they come out of a Town surrendered to the Enemy, with a Mask on; for there's

none:

* *Phil. iii. 18, 19.* † *2 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,*

none of their Companions but have, as well as they, *a Form of Godliness*. Well therefore might the *Psalmist*, when he mentioned *the Covetous*, add, *Whom the Lord abhors*, *Psalm*. x. 3.

And now methinks that Man is perfectly blind, who cannot by the Eye of Faith see Multitudes of rich Men sinking down into Hell. Methinks I have the dreadful Cry of them in my Ears as they are falling into it, and over-hear them very mournfully say, *fools that we were, we would not lay out some of that Money which we cou'd well enough have spared, according to God's Command; and therefore, instead of mounting up to yonder Regions of Light, we are now tumbling headlong into this*—— And then the rising Stench and Smoke of the dreadful Lake of Fire and Brimstone, confusedly mingled with the scorching Flames flashing up, and so greedy to devour, that they meet them Part of the Way, do almost choke them, that they are not able to finish the Sentence. And there we must leave them, rolling up and down in the Midst of the boiling and black, tho' flaming Waves, where the miserable Wretches must abide for ever, without the Relief of Hope, that ever they shall have so much as the Ease of one Moment, or that any Period shall be put to their exquisite Torments.

But I am loth my Discourse should leave my Reader in Hell, that would be a sad Conclusion of my Book, and of his Life. I have shewn him the Gates of Death; but 'tis with this Design, to prevent his entring in. I would not say to any Man, *Thy Money perish with thee*. I would much rather exhort Men to labour after, and pray God they may have a better Mind, and readily part with some of their Money, that they may not lose their Souls, for 'tis impossible they should save both of them. To Repentance and Holiness towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, let there be added an abundant Charity to the Poor; so will rich Men lay up in Store for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come, and lay hold on eternal Life. Amen and amen.

E I N I S.

they,
t the
Whom

blind,
des of
I have
ey are
nfully
some of
d, ac-
ead of
mbling
Strench
Brim-
Flames
y meet
, that
there
n the
Waves,
ever,
shall
r that
ments.
e my
sion of
m the
o pre-
Man,
rather
d they
with
their
oth of
God,
be ad-
rich
dat on
t Life.